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CONTENTS

Mountain Lake Park (Md.) Convention.....338
How the New Creature Fulfils the Law.....339
 The Jews Under a Second Condemnation.....339
 "Who Shall Deliver Me?".....340
Keeping Our Garments White.....341
 The Precious Blood Alone Can Cleanse.....342
How to Locate Ourselves.....342
 Evidences of Our Acceptance by the Father.....343
 Evidences of Backward Leanings.....343
The Christian's Attitude in the Duties of Life....344
"The Wisdom From Above".....345
The Fiery Furnace.....346
 Disloyalty! Ingratitude! Treason!.....346
In a Den of Lions.....347
Who Were Typified by the Levites?.....348
Covetous Conversation.....349
Interesting Questions.....350
Berean Questions in Scripture Studies.....351
Brother Russell in Great Britain.....351

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MOUNTAIN LAKE PARK, MD., CONVENTION

It is not often necessary to urge people to stay away from a Convention of Bible Students. However, we must do this very thing. By the time this reaches you every reasonably proper accommodation at Mt. Lake Park and at Oakland, will probably have been assigned. We have even put in cots for 600 and expect that these will soon all be engaged. The full capacity is only about 2,500. We supposed this would be ample for our needs this year, because of the Convention Tour. There are still plenty of accommodations at \$1.75 and \$2 and \$2.50 and \$3 per day inclusive, but not many can afford these prices.

All future communications respecting Convention accommodations, please address to I.B.S.A. Convention Committee, Mt. Lake Park, Md.

BEREAN STUDY QUESTIONS

We now have prepared pamphlets giving questions on TABERNACLE SHADOWS and on STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. I and Vol. V. Questions on the other volumes are in preparation and will be announced later. These little pamphlets are priced at five cents each--fifty cents per dozen, any kind, any assortment. Indeed all our paper-bound pamphlets, previously sold at ten cents, will hereafter be supplied at the uniform price of five cents each, fifty cents per dozen, including postage. This lower price, averaged up in the pamphlets thick and thin, will about cover the cost, and will permit many more of them to go into circulation.

The Class-Extension has already started many new Berean Classes. All such new Classes, desiring to take up the study of Vol. I, STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, are offered one copy each person of the question pamphlet free--a donation from the Society. This offer stands good until Oct. 1. We made donations of this character to about a dozen new Classes started in the vicinity of Brooklyn and, wishing to be impartial, we throw the opportunity open to all. Order only for the present number of the classes, please.

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These prices all include postage.

WHEN VISITING New York or London, surely our friends will call at the Society's headquarters. Send mail in our care.

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BROOKLYN BETHEL HYMNS FOR SEPTEMBER

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 September follow: (1) 165; (2) 204; (3) 99; (4) 145; (5) 299; (6) 293; (7) 87; (8) 95; (9) 325; (10) 20; (11) 333; (12) 307; (13) 78; (14) 208; (15) 152; (16) 135; (17) 318; (18) 107; (19) 35; (20) 191; (21) 113; (22) 273; (23) 291; (24) 7; (25) 218; (26) 312; (27) 8; (28) 129; (29) 229; (30) 286.

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Very Special Convention Rates Have Just Been Granted us by the South Eastern Railways Association

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R4868 : page 339

HOW THE NEW CREATURE FULFILS THE LAW

IN HIS LETTER to the Romans St. Paul goes very far back in his reasoning and brings the subject of Sin Atonement down in logical order to the Christian's standpoint. In the first and second chapters he

shows how sin entered into the world and why some are more blemished than others. Yet the greater degradation of some does not prove that man originated with the monkey, but that some of the race went down more rapidly in their evil ways than did others. Then the Apostle goes on, "Art thou a Jew and makest thou a boast of the Law?" God gave this Law to the Jews and not to the Gentiles; therefore, only the Jew could get its blessing or its curse. But the Jew thought that the Law was the thing by which he could be justified. In this way he stumbled. The Apostle wished the Jew to know that by the deeds of the Law no flesh could be justified in God's sight. The Jews were seeking for eternal life. The Law Covenant proffered them that eternal life if they would obey it. But they found that they were unable to obey the Divine Law; and that, therefore, the Law Covenant was unprofitable to them; for it gave them death instead of life. No imperfect man can keep God's Law.

In the fifth chapter St. Paul proceeds to show how the redemption was provided. Then he continues, saying, Before the Law, sin was in the world. But where there was no Law there could be no transgression of the Law. Before the Law was given the Jew had his share with the rest of the world in a hope of deliverance and blessing; but as soon as the Law came, which he was unable to keep, he was cut off entirely, so far as hope of justification was concerned; consequently, Jews have had two condemnations upon them--the Adamic condemnation and that of the Law--"Cursed by the Law and bruised by the Fall." We see that the Law Covenant could not grant the Divine blessing of life to the Jew because he was unable to live up to its requirements.

THE JEWS UNDER A SECOND CONDEMNATION.

In connection with this argument showing the difference between the attitude of the Jewish people toward God and that of the other nations, St. Paul says, "Sin is not imputed where there is no Law." God had made a special Covenant with the Jews, of which Moses was the Mediator. By obedience to this Covenant they were to have eternal life. The Apostle wished them to see that they did not get eternal life and that the difficulty was that they did not keep the Law. He wished them to see that in this very Law the Jew was condemned. He wished them to see that they were in disfavor. He wished them to see that in covenanting to keep the Law and failing they brought an additional condemnation upon themselves. Sentence had been passed upon Father Adam. He died; and all of his children were born in a dying condition, and legally dead. Thus the Jews were doubly sentenced as compared with the rest of the world, who were all condemned through heredity on account of the one transgression. The Apostle was showing the

Jews that there was only one door of hope and that, while all mankind needed a Savior, the Jews needed one more than did any other people in the world. The Jew had enjoyed much advantage and he, therefore, had the more condemnation.

The Jews thought that the Gentiles were worse in God's sight than were themselves. They said, Now think of the rest of the world, eating their mackerel and swine and hares, and doing things that we would not do! Now, says the Apostle, "Sin is not imputed where there is no Law." God has not charged infraction of this Law to any of the nations. You have violated God's Law many times, for if you have broken even one commandment, you have broken the Law as a whole. The arrangement was not that you should have eternal life for keeping certain commandments, but for keeping them all.

The Apostle goes on to say, Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not know the Law and who did not sin according to Adam's transgression. In Adam all died. The world is under the general condemnation to death, not for sins of their own, but for Adam's transgression. God transferred us Jews from this condition to the Law Covenant arrangement. But we have failed in this second trial and are in more condemnation than are the Gentiles.

Thus the Apostle proved to them that not only the Gentiles needed a Savior, but the Jews also; not only the world outside of Israel, but Israel also; and that because Israel was under a special arrangement with God there needed to be some special work done for their recovery.

Then the Apostle proceeds further to show that Christ, who knew no sin, was made a curse for the Jew; and that thus there is a special provision made by God to release the Jew from condemnation. The special sense in which Christ was made a curse for the Jew the Apostle has stipulated. (Gal. 3:13,14.) This was to hang upon a tree--the extreme penalty of the Law. (Deut. 21:23.) Christ was made a curse in that He died on the cross. (I Peter 2:24.) Such a death would not

R4869 : page 340

have been necessary for the salvation of the rest of mankind, but it was necessary for that of the Jew.

"WHO SHALL DELIVER ME?"

Taking the standpoint of a Jew under the Law, St. Paul, in chapter 7, describes the condition of Israel, saying that the Jew had undertaken to keep the Law, but had come under bondage to that Law; because of the weakness of his body he could not attain life. Then St. Paul cries, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" He was under the Law which says, Serve God, not only with your mind, but perfectly. This he could not do because of weakness of the flesh.

Who would deliver him from this dead body which caused the trouble? His mind was in harmony with righteousness, but he was imperfect. Then he tells us how he got rid of the condemnation of the dead body, that deliverance came through Jesus Christ.

How have we this relief? All who have made consecration and by faith come into Christ are reckoned dead to the flesh and alive as New Creatures. So St. Paul was glorying, neither in the flesh, nor in the Law, but in Christ, who delivered him from this condemnation of the flesh as it would belong to the Jew or to any of Adam's posterity.

In verse 18 the Apostle says, "In my flesh there dwelleth no good thing"--that is, no perfection. It has imperfection from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head. Although the Israelites sought to keep the Law the reason why they did not do so was that the flesh was weak. So we are to admit that the flesh is imperfect, while the New Creature strives to keep the body under. We are to realize that from the standpoint of Divine Justice we are walking after righteousness--no longer walking after sin. The thought of "walking after" is that we do not catch up, that we are not living up to perfect righteousness, but striving thereto. The New Creature is handicapped by the flesh. And what was true of the Apostle must be true of all the Lord's people. If at any time we have thought we were living up to God's standard of righteousness we have not had the proper conception. If we see what the Lord read into the Ten Commandments, it is this: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God [not with part of the mind, but] with all of thy mind, with all of thy strength; and thy neighbor as thyself. This is the real spirit of the Law and its requirement; and this would be possible only to a being that is perfect. On account of his imperfections man cannot keep the Law; therefore, God has provided redemption and forgiveness of sins through His Son. The world in general will have the opportunity of restitution, of having their minds restored gradually. But for the Church there is a different provision. We present our bodies a living sacrifice, after we recognize the "high calling." Then our High Priest sacrifices us and God accepts it as a part of our Lord's own sacrifice. And eventually we shall secure a spirit body, and not a human body such as Adam had and such as is promised to the world.

DELIVERANCE THROUGH CHRIST

In chapter 8 the Apostle shows that a way of escape from the condemnation of the Law Covenant was provided for those Jews who come into Christ. Of the Church class he says, "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwell in you." The Church are said to be New Creatures in Christ Jesus. To these "old things have passed away and all things have become new." (2 Cor. 5:17.) "The righteousness

of the Law is fulfilled in us who are walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

The Apostle intimates to us that if we are in Christ we are keeping God's Law in a way that is impossible to others. But the New Creature is to remember that he has not yet received his new body, which will be perfect and which he will receive in the First Resurrection. In the meantime he has only the body of flesh in which to operate. At death, "It is sown an animal body; it is raised a spirit body." (I Cor. 15:44.) The old body was not strong enough to keep God's Law; even with the assistance of the New Creature the body is still weak. Why? Because we are born in sin and shapen in iniquity. Sin has reigned for over six thousand years. The weakness, etc., are all the more intense by reason of the long centuries of sin.

In the statement, "In that it [the Law Covenant] was weak through the flesh" (vs. 3,4), the Apostle does not wish us to understand that the Law was weak, for it was perfect. The Law was capable, but the Law Covenant was weak. There was some fault to be found with the Law Covenant, which was weak in that it had an insufficient mediator who could not give a ransom to God for mankind. The same Law Covenant, under a better Mediator, Christ Jesus, will be strong in this particular in which formerly it was weak.

Any of the Jews who could have kept the Law Covenant would have had eternal life, for this was the Divine promise: "The man which doeth these things shall live by them." (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5.) Those who will be willing and able to keep the Divine Law, eventually, are to have eternal life. All who will not do so are not to have eternal life.

The Apostle says that if righteousness could have come by the Law it would have come thus--instead of by the cross. Father Adam had been condemned. His whole race was condemned in him because of his disobedience. They were unable to keep the Law, hence, by God's arrangement, as by one man sin entered into the world and death as the result of sin, by one man also comes reconciliation, freedom from sin.--I Cor. 15:21,22.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW IS FULFILLED IN US

What comfort and consolation are in this assurance! These are wonderful words of life, indeed! They inspire us with hope. If God will accept perfect heart-intentions, instead of the absolute perfection of the flesh, then, indeed, we have hope of attaining to the standard which He has marked for us--the standard of perfection. We can walk after, or according to the Spirit. So far as our mortal bodies are concerned we cannot walk up to the Spirit's requirements; but our minds can walk according to the Spirit; our intentions can be perfect; and what our Heavenly Father seeks in us is perfection of intention and as perfect control of

our flesh as possible.

The statement that our Lord condemned sin in the flesh means that He sentenced sin and made possible the overthrow of sin. Sin in the flesh had already been condemned that the world through our Lord might be saved. He demonstrated that a perfect man need not sin, and thus magnified the Divine Law. The question may arise as to whether He did more than magnify the Law. Yes. He made an arrangement whereby the Kingdom of Righteousness shall overthrow sin and bring in everlasting righteousness.

The spirit of the Law that was given to the Jew is upon the New Creature, but not the Law Covenant. We are received of the Lord aside from the Law Covenant. God's Law is not to be ignored. Justice has but one Law

R4869 : page 341

and that was given to the Jew as the basis of their Covenant. St. Paul goes on to show that as the Israelites did not get eternal life by their endeavors to keep that Law, neither could anyone else get life in that way. But God has made an arrangement through Christ by which this curse of the Law through human weakness will be set aside by the satisfaction of Justice. (Rom. 8:14.) The Church is also under the new commandment of sacrificial love.

"Gather My saints together unto Me, those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) Those who have accepted this new arrangement give up all earthly interests to become New Creatures. And the spirit of the Law is fulfilled in these, for they are walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit of the Law, seeking to attain, through Christ, the blessed portion to which they are invited--joint-heirship in the Kingdom. Their work with Christ at the present time is to share in the sacrifice, the blood of which, in the end of this Age, will be used in sealing with Israel the New Covenant. When the New Covenant shall be opened to Israel and all the world, it will signify to them an opportunity for eternal life, through the better Mediator, the Anointed Head and Body.

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R4870 : page 341

KEEPING OUR GARMENTS WHITE

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life; but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels."--Rev. 3:5.

ALTHOUGH there were persecutions of individuals, such as recorded in Acts, the

early Church as a whole was not subjected to the severest of trials at first. But when the Truth began to spread and had the enmity, not only of the Jews, but also of the Greeks, emperors and governors found favor with the masses by persecuting the followers of Jesus. And for aught we know so it will be in the not far distant future. For a long time the pure Truth has been hidden from men, and worldliness, with a form of godliness, has had the upper hand in influential circles; but doubtless, as the troublous times which the Scriptures predict for the end of this Age draw closer, those who will stand firm for the Word of the Lord's Testimony may expect to be made the scapegoats, under various pretexts.

We shall not be surprised if a considerable amount of persecution develop within the next few years against all the "children of light" who will walk up to that light. John, the beloved disciple, in some measure or degree illustrated or represented the last, living members of the "little flock." Doubtless this was the meaning of our Lord's statement, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John 21:22,23.) John did not tarry, but a class whom he in some respects illustrated has tarried--a class who see with the eyes of their understanding the visions and revelations which John saw in symbols, in a trance.

There are many reasons for concluding that, while the various messages in the second and third chapters of Revelation were given to the seven churches specified and were applicable to them, they should properly have a wider application to the whole Church of Christ, the number seven representing completeness, and the order representing different epochs in the history of the Church. Thus the Church at Ephesus would represent the condition of the Church in the Apostle's day, at the time of the writing of the messages, while the Laodicean Church would represent the Church in our day, in the end of this Gospel Age. The other churches would correspondingly represent different epochs intermediate, between the beginning and now.

To think otherwise would be to attach more importance to those seven comparatively small churches of Asia Minor than would seem to have been appropriate, and would imply an ignoring of other churches larger and more influential than they, as, for instance, the churches at Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Colosse, Philippi, Thessalonica, etc. Furthermore, the details of the message given to these seven churches apply to and fit historically the experiences of the one Church of the Living God, over every member and branch of which the Lord has a care. This thought that the number seven signified completeness, we find emphasized in the other symbolic representations --in the seven golden candlesticks, and seven stars, etc.

The first three chapters of Revelation contain particular

specifications and general admonitions, not only for the local churches therein mentioned, but for all "overcomers." They apply not only to the different epochs in the history of the Church as a whole, but to different classes in any one epoch in the history of the Church.

IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING OUR GARMENTS UNDEFILED

The words in our text, addressed to the Church at Sardis, or to that epoch of the general Church symbolized by Sardis, are explained by the context. In this Church there was a wrong condition of things, a defilement. Trespasses committed had not been repented of and forgiveness sought from the Lord.

In the context it is stated that the majority of the Sardis Church had not kept their garments undefiled. But "thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments." By these words our Lord seems to emphasize the thought that no one will gain the prize of the "high calling" if he does not keep his garments undefiled from the flesh. Whoever fails to do so will not be of the overcoming class to whom will be given this choice blessing, is the argument. He that would be an "overcomer" must be clothed in white raiment. Any who do not persevere in keeping their garments clean will have their names blotted out. In this connection we remember the words of this same Apostle John, that the blood of Christ washes us, not only from the sins that are past, but also from all stains upon the robe. He says, "The blood of Jesus Christ...cleanseth us from all sin." (I John 1:7.) It cleanses us from all unintentional blemishes, spots upon our garments. Whoever does not thus keep himself cleansed will not be an "overcomer." It is only such as observe this cleansing whose names will not be blotted out.

As to our ability to discern whether or not we are keeping our garments clean, only the individual himself can know to what extent he has watched his conduct and kept up his communication with the Lord and daily scrutinized life's affairs, the incidents of the day, and asked forgiveness for shortcomings and trespasses. Others might surmise, but they could not know. We all have sense enough to know what things are right and what are wrong. If the wrong thing seems not very wrong, it would indicate that we are growing careless in regard to our robe. As a result we would have less interest in the Truth, less interest in keeping our robes

R4870 : page 342

clean, less interest in prayer meetings, etc. Between such and the Lord there would be a cloud, and a condition of leanness would be sure to follow.

The faithful "overcomers" watch and keep their garments clean. "They have not defiled their garments," they

have kept them "unspotted from the world." They have not been willing to have sin contaminate them and to separate them from the Lord, but have quickly applied for and obtained the precious blood to remove every stain. They are so heartily opposed to sin and so earnest about keeping their garments unspotted that the Adversary gets no hold upon them--"that Wicked One toucheth them not." All this indicates a full submission of their wills to the will of Christ. They are "dead with Him" and hence could not willingly practise sin.

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD ALONE CAN CLEANSE

Evidently, the majority of the people of Sardis were of the Great Company class and needed to "be zealous and repent"; for they were not in a condition to receive the greatest blessing possible for them. The principle is applicable, evidently, not only to the Church in Sardis, but to the Church in general. The things to be overcome are the difficulties in the "narrow way." These difficulties make the way narrow--all the opposition of our flesh to the things of God, the oppositions of the world in general, and the snares which the Adversary may place for us. The love of self, of popularity, of worldly prosperity, must be overcome, as well as love for man-made creeds and theories.

How gracious is the provision of our God in thus presenting us with the Robe which covers all the repented-of blemishes of the past as well as the unintentional and unwitting imperfections of the present! Under this arrangement it is possible for the Lord's people to walk so carefully, so circumspectly (looking all around at every step), as to keep their garments unspotted from the world. But, alas, how few, if any, there be who have always lived up, in all the past of their Christian lives, to this high standard which alone will insure the keeping of their garments white!

Seeing that any deflection from absolute purity of heart would constitute a stain, a spot upon the robe, we might inquire with great concern, Is there any possibility of having such spots or stains removed and of getting my robe white again? Thank God, yes; there is a way by which the spots and wrinkles may be removed from our robes and leave them once more as white and clean as at first. The stain-remover is the precious blood. As the Apostle says, "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

LET US JUDGE OURSELVES

While all our efforts could not remove a single stain, which the "precious blood" alone can remove, yet it is well for us that while realizing our Lord's forgiveness and the cleansing of our robe, we should promptly seek to discipline ourselves in repentance, otherwise we may expect

that while our Lord cleanses our robes in answer to our earnest prayers, He will, nevertheless, put upon us certain chastisements for our correction in righteousness and for the strengthening of our characters along the points of weakness. The Apostle teaches this when he says, "If we would judge [correct, chastise] ourselves, then we should not be judged [corrected, chastised] of the Lord; but when we are judged of the Lord we are chastened that we might not be condemned with the world."-- I Cor. 11:31,32.

God's grace cannot admit to heavenly perfection those who have not robes of spotless righteousness; hence, we are shown that those who have not cared for their garments and kept them white must be put through severe experiences before they can in any sense of the word be sharers of heavenly favors. These severe experiences are shown in the symbol as washing their robes in a great tribulation. But to show that not penance nor sufferings would cleanse the robes, it is particularly stated that the efficacy for the cleansing is the "blood of the Lamb." Many will be thus purified, purged; and their garments,

R4871 : page 342

now soiled by contact with the world, will be cleansed of every guilty stain when they, realizing the folly of their course, shall repentantly appeal to the Lord and use His help.

We rejoice that these will ultimately sing praises to the Lord and be glad in His wondrous grace. But we note that even after their robes shall have been washed white in the blood of the Lamb, during the time of trouble, they will wear no crowns; but, having finally overcome, they will be granted "palms" as emblems of their victory through Christ; and although they can never be of the living Temple of which Christ is the Head, we are told that they shall be servants in that temple; and although they shall never sit in the Throne, they will be highly privileged to serve "before the Throne. Grand and glorious privileges will be theirs; but they will lose the great "prize," having sold it for the mess of pottage of present seeming advantage, which proves unsatisfying and brings bitter results. What exhortation to holiness, to complete consecration to His will could be stronger!

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R4871 : page 342

HOW TO LOCATE OURSELVES

ADMITTING that we might not be able to locate others in relationship to the Divine Plan, should we not be able to locate ourselves? If so, how?

We should be able to locate ourselves in

respect to God's grace. If we know the various steps to be taken and corners to be turned, we should know just how many of these we have taken and just where we are. Perhaps the following notation of the steps of a righteous man called of God to joint-heirship with His Son will help us:--

(1) A longing for righteousness, truth, purity, implies a drawing from the Lord along the lines of the less depraved parts of our fallen nature. Our first response to this drawing is to seek righteousness and seek meekness. To such the Lord says, "Draw near unto Me and I will draw near unto you." Numerous steps may be taken after the first one of turning our back upon wilful sin. Each step will bring us a little nearer to the Lord and to righteousness, and should show us more clearly than before that "in our flesh dwelleth no perfection," that we cannot live up to even our own estimate and interpretation of the Divine Law--that we need grace and

R4872 : page 342

help from on high. This entire course is one of justification in the sense that it tends to harmony with God and His righteous requirements.

The soul that thus has reached the place where it cries out to the loving God by this time sees clearly the need of the Savior and that Jesus is the Redeemer. It hears the message, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." It responds, "Lord, gladly will I go to the Father through You."

(2) The reply of Jesus as to what are the terms of

R4872 : page 343

discipleship point out the next step in the way to God and, accepted, brings the blessing. Our Lord's words are, "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." The Master does not urge haste in decision. The haste is left to the suppliant, whose love of righteousness and desire for fellowship with God will be measured by his haste in accepting the terms of discipleship. To one and all the Master says, "Sit down first and count the cost." Do not put your hand to the plow and then draw back. Those who take years to count the cost will very rarely win the prize, we may feel sure. The reasonable course is to weigh the proposition--the giving up of self with earthly hopes, aims, prospects, joys, entirely into the Father's hands as living sacrifices, with the prospect of suffering, trials, testing, proving in the present life, and, if faithful, glory, honor and immortality on the heavenly plane. It should not require long for a mature person of loyal heart to realize that the Lord's service is a desirable one and that the price, our little all, is insignificant. The zealous and faithful will speedily say, "Here, Lord, I give

myself away; it is all that I can do."

Then comes the Redeemer's part. In harmony with the Father's Plan He now stands as Advocate for all such as have come unto the Father through Him. He advocates their cause as their representative in the heavenly court, approving of them and of their consecration, having, additionally, by the imputation of the merit of His own sacrifice, made up for their deficiencies, that they may be made the righteousness of God through Him. We see that the Advocate thus presents our name and covers our blemishes, and our sacrifices are accepted of the Father--up to the time when the last member shall have been received--up to the time when the door to this high calling shall have been closed, when the last of the wise virgins shall have entered beyond the veil.

The Father's acceptance of us is indicated by our adoption and begetting of the Holy Spirit and the commencement of the sealing--the impressing upon us, as New Creatures, of the Divine likeness, disposition or spirit. We should all know very positively whether or not we have taken these two steps. If we have not, it is useless for us to look further.

EVIDENCES OF OUR ACCEPTANCE BY THE FATHER

(3) The begetting of the Holy Spirit in the early Church was indicated by certain miraculous gifts, but this was for a special purpose in connection with the establishment of the Church. As Paul pointed out, those gifts were intended to pass away. (I Cor. 13:8.) They were given by the "laying on of the hands of the Apostles." (Acts 8:18.) Hence after the death of the Apostles these gifts were not bestowed upon any. And when those who had received the gifts died, the gifts themselves ceased--thus passed away. But instead of the gifts came the fruits of the Spirit as evidences or proofs of acceptance by the Lord and induction as members or branches of the Vine. The fruit buds are small at first. They need and have the Husbandman's care. He prunes us--he cuts away the earthly things to which we are prone to cling. He leaves us without much earthly support except that which is connected directly with the Root, the Vine. Thus cut off from earthly ambition in harmony with our consecration unto death the Spirit of the Lord comes into us more and more, producing fruits of the Spirit, even as the juices of the vine go to the branches and its clusters. Such prunings are an evidence of our membership in the Vine and our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ; for the Heavenly Husbandman thus treats all true branches of the True Vine. We should begin to see fruits and graces. Our energy should be manifested in a variety of ways towards the Lord, towards His brethren and toward all mankind, in proportion as we have contact with them.

Amongst other indications of Divine favor would be fellowship with the Lord in prayer and through His Word

--a love of the Divine Plan, a delight in everything that is righteous, just, true, noble--a desire to promote all such interests to the extent of our opportunities. Another evidence of faithfulness would be our being accounted worthy to suffer reproaches and persecutions for the Lord's sake and the Truth's sake--and our acceptance of these as of Divine providence.

A further indication of our harmony with the Lord would be in our increased appreciation of His Word, a deeper insight into its precious teachings and an increasing pleasure in serving it out to others--not for vainglory, not that they might think something of us, but for the Lord's glory and for the good of those who desire to know His will.

EVIDENCES OF BACKWARD LEANINGS

But some may fail to attain to these depths and heights and lengths and breadths of blessing, of privilege. They may content themselves with little of the Lord's Truth and grace, little of the fellowship of the brethren, and, proportionately, more of the world's. These are failing to perform their Covenant and obligations of zealous sacrifice. They may be good and honorable and kind. They may be loyal to the Lord to the degree of not wishing to do anything contrary to His will; but they are failing of the extreme of loyalty, namely, of the anxiety to know and to do. These are in danger of being counted unworthy to be in the Bride Class and of being consigned to the larger company of the loyal but less faithful. Even to attain this honor and position they will need to be put through trials, sufferings, difficulties, the destruction of their flesh. But they will not have the high reward because of failure to run the race with zeal. Some may even have attained to all the glorious privileges of consecration, service, knowledge, etc., and then become cold, careless, overcharged with the cares of this life, and thus bring forth less fruit and not be counted worthy of membership in the Bride Class. Nevertheless the Lord will deal with them, if they are truly His, to chasten them and, if possible, to prepare them for the "great company" class, even though this may necessitate great tribulations.

Evidences in our day of a condition of unfitness for the "little flock" and danger of missing it would be a worldly spirit, a careless spirit, a love of the world, a slackness of zeal for God, for righteousness, for the brethren, and a failure to use opportunities and to seek for others for the furtherance of the praises of "Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light"--a failure to go on to a greater development in the fruits and graces of the Spirit. A loss of love and zeal for God and His cause and the brethren follows and an increasing dimness of the Divine Plan already seen and recognized. The extreme of this condition is "outer darkness"--a blindness to heavenly things of the

Divine Plan such as covers the world of mankind in general--without the illumination of the Lord's Word and Spirit.

As for those who commit "the sin unto death": It is scarcely necessary to discuss these, because persons who reach this hopeless condition rarely, we believe, realize it or are able to comprehend their own situation. So long

R4872 : page 344

as there is a fear of the Second Death and a desire for eternal life and a desire for harmony with God, there is hope. Two classes are described as being "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." One is a class which, after having received the holy things of God as New Creatures, turn back to the world, to its aims, its pleasures, its desires, its ambitions, its sins. These, completely repudiating the covenant of sacrifice, are in a hopeless condition as respects the future life. But we may perhaps say, fortunately, they do not realize their position, but rather feel the contentment of the dead world; or, perhaps, worse than the world, they are acrimonious and bitter against the members of The Christ and against the Truth, which they once appreciated but have left. Another class who go into the Second Death are pointed out as guilty of doctrinal deflection--the renouncing of the Redeemer, the loss of appreciation of the merit of His sacrifice and of the opportunities which that sacrifice secured to us in the way of sacrificing.

We are also asked respecting our Lord's statement, There shall arise false Prophets and false Messiahs who shall show great signs and wonders, in so much that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. We are asked whether these very elect refer to the "little flock" or include the "great company." We reply that evidently "the very elect" means the faithful. All of the Spirit-begotten ones are counted in as of the elect, for, so long as they are faithful, they are the very elect. It would appear that these words of our Lord did not refer to something specially of our day, but rather to something that has applied for centuries, just as wars and tumults have progressed for centuries. One entire chapter in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. IV., is devoted to the examination of this great prophecy and we refer our readers to a fresh study. The false teachers and false Messiahs who have deceived many are represented today, we believe, by some very large and very prosperous denominations which are deceiving themselves and millions

R4873 : page 344

of others into supposing that they are the True Church, the True Messiah, the True Vine of the Heavenly Father's right-hand planting. On the contrary, branches of the True Vine may be in these different denominations, but the earthly institutions themselves belong to what the

Scriptures designate "the vine of the earth," the fruitage of which will soon be gathered into the wine-press of the wrath of God. (Rev. 14:19.) God's saintly ones down through the Age have been more or less in contact with these great systems, anti-Christ systems, deceived and deceiving systems. But "the very elect," the saintly, as members of the true Body of Christ, will not now be allowed to mistake these systems for the true Church. The Lord guides them that they are not ensnared.

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R4871 : page 344

THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE IN THE DUTIES OF LIFE

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."--Rom. 12:11.

THE WORD business has a very broad signification. Whatever we do we are to do all unto the Lord; or rather, whatsoever we do we should do altogether unto the Lord. With the Christian, the chief business of life is to glorify God, to serve Him and, incidentally, as directed by the Lord, to serve the brethren, to serve the Truth, to serve righteousness, to serve all men as he has opportunity, "doing good unto all, especially to the household of faith." In our text the word business seems to include any occupation, of any kind, that would be approved of the Lord. It would not do for us to say, Be not slothful in the liquor business or the tobacco business, for we are to give our attention only to those occupations which we believe have the Lord's approval.

The expression, "not slothful," is equivalent to the expression, not lazy, not indolent. The Apostle's thought seems to be that any matter proper to be done should have the intelligent and active attention of him whose duty or privilege it is. Whatever is worth doing is worth doing zealously, well. The Apostle's thought is that we are, first of all, to see that our business is a worthy one; and secondly, to prosecute it faithfully. If it is to provide money for either our personal needs or the Lord's work, we should prosecute that business with energy, with alacrity and with appreciation of the privilege, as done to Him. We should not be slothful or careless in any way.

A certain amount of provision for our temporal need is necessary. How much time is to be given thus is a thing for each to determine for himself. After we have made a consecration to the Lord, to give our lives in His service, there is very little we can give at best. We should see that we "redeem the time," buy it back from the affairs of this life, as far as reasonably possible, in order to secure the more of it for the special service of promulgating the Truth. This does not mean that we should

leave our families dependent upon others. We should care for our proper interests. We should not be overcharged, but should have a proper care for those dependent upon us. As for our own requirement, having food and raiment, we should be content and not wish to accumulate for a long period of life.

The word fervent signifies very hot, to boil. The thought that the Apostle gives us that whatsoever we do we should do heartily, with our might, as unto the Lord. The one who takes the course of doing whatever he does in a careless manner forms a slothful habit, which is a drag on him all through life. Whatever we do we should do fervently. We are the Lord's and whatever business we have is His. The Lord is pleased that we should be energetic in our affairs. If any one is in a business where he is violating conscience, he should get out of it into one in which he could do some good in the world.

SHOULD NOT BE BURDENED WITH ANXIOUS CARE

The Lord's people should not worry or take anxious thought respecting tomorrow. The Scriptures imply, however, that we should be provident and careful, laying by in store, that we may be prepared to do something for neighbors and friends who may need. Dollars laid by merely represent so many days of labor saved. We should not use all of our resources upon the immediate present, but exercise self-control, to the end that we may have good results in the future. This rule will apply to food and clothing, also. If our store is small, we should not wonder where the next suit of clothes will come from. If we had the next suit it might be stolen. Neither should neighbors and friends turn against me? What if I should get into great disrepute on account of the Truth? We should leave all such things to the Lord. If we need persecutions, we hope that He will let them come to us. If in the way He chooses to make the Truth worth something to us, we should be glad. "All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."--2 Tim. 3:12.

R4871 : page 345

On the other hand, the Lord does not intend us to go through life in a careless manner, happy-go-lucky, so to speak. We are to have a proper thought for the day. What are the responsibilities of today? What are the cares? As the Scriptures enjoin, be "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." We are to have a great deal of zeal. We are not to worry over things that may happen tomorrow, but have faith that God will be with us tomorrow, and given grace sufficient for us when it shall come. If the Lord's people are living faithfully they will have a great deal to think about every day. They will not need to go out in advance to worry about tomorrow. We shall have plenty to do if we give attention to the present difficulties,

and go to the Throne of Grace that we may obtain grace and strength to help today.

Our Lord assures us that if the main thought of our hearts is concerning His service and the promotion of righteousness and the attainment of the Kingdom which God has promised to them that love Him, then we need carry no anxious cares respecting the future. As His disciples we shall have trials and tribulations enough day by day, and shall need daily to lean upon the Bridegroom's arm as we seek to walk the "narrow way." Sufficient for each day will be the evil of itself; and thanks by to God, we have also His promise that daily His grace shall be sufficient for us.

To those who are the Lord's consecrated people it is the greatest privilege imaginable to serve the Lord. The Lord is looking to see to what extent we are willing to sacrifice earthly things, earthly approval, that we may have His approval and hear His "Well done!"

Let all who would run the race successfully look well to their zeal and activity in the Lord's work. If we bury our one or many talents under a weight of worldly cares and encumbrances which might be avoided or set aside; if we bury them under worldly ambitions for either self or family--whether this be by wasting consecrated time upon science, philosophy, music, or art, or upon business, politics, or pleasures, or in pampering pride and appetite--then, as unfaithful servants, we shall sooner or later go into "outer darkness."

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R4873 : page 345

THE WISDOM FROM ABOVE

--DANIEL 1:8-20.--SEPTEMBER 10.--

"It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth."--Romans 14:21.

WE HAVE NOTED the cruelty of the kings of olden times. It is appropriate, therefore, that we note also certain instances in which they manifested great breadth of generosity and wisdom. Today's study illustrates this. Amongst the earlier captives brought by Nebuchadnezzar from Jerusalem some twenty years before its destruction were four young men of evidently noble birth and religious training. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. These captives were not maltreated nor enslaved, in the ordinary sense of the term. Their intellectual qualities were discerned and they were put into a superior school that they with others might be fitted to constitute a board of wise men, counselors of the king. So different is all this from the nepotism, "graft"

and "pool" of our day that it seems almost incomprehensible.

At the same time the instance was an overruling of Divine providence by which not merely rebels against God in Israel were suffered to be captured and deported, but some also who were most loyal of heart to the principles of the Divine Law. We may here learn a lesson of how God is able to make even the disasters of life work out blessings for those who are truly loyal to Him even as Daniel and his companions were blessed and prospered in the enemy's land, and advanced to positions far higher than they would ever have attained in their own land.

ADVANTAGES OF ABSTEMIOUSNESS

The young Hebrews were attached to the king's household, and were provided with extraordinary delicacies, including spirituous liquors. The policy of the king in providing sumptuously for all the students, who were from various lands, was that, being well nourished, they might be in their best physical and mental condition. This lesson shows that it is a mistake to suppose that high living is specially conducive to intellectuality--not to mention spirituality.

From the very beginning, under God's providence, the deportment of Daniel brought him into special favor with the prince of the eunuchs who had in charge the temporalities of these students. There is something in a meek and quiet spirit that is impressive; and as a rule such a spirit comes only from a proper, religious training. To this eunuch Daniel, and his associates through him, appealed, requesting that instead of the fine food and liquors provided they might have a plain, vegetable diet.

The eunuch replied that he would be very glad to comply with the request, only he feared that when examination time should come, these four Hebrews, fed upon the plainer fare, would appear to a disadvantage and cause a reflection upon himself and possibly cost the loss of his position, if not indeed the loss of his life. Daniel, however, appealed for a trial of the matter for ten days, agreeing to abide by the results. At the end of this short time, comparison showed that the four young men who practiced abstemiousness were fairer and fatter in flesh than those who shared the king's bounty; so their request was granted.

Of them we read, "Now as for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." At the end of the period of their preparation, the king communed with the students, "and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah...and in every matter of wisdom and understanding concerning which the king inquired of them he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in his realm."

What was the secret of this wisdom and understanding?

Did not the secret lie in the blessing of God and in the fact that these young men sought to devote their lives to the doing of the Divine will--to the doing of righteousness? Thus we see that our hearts and minds can be free from selfish motives, free from superstition, free from fears, free to do the will of God at any cost. Such minds anywhere, at any time, are scarce. Such minds always develop wisdom. On the other hand, sensuality, selfishness, the grinding of personal axes, always becloud the judgment. What we need today in every walk of life is consecrated men of the stamp of Daniel and his companions --whole hearted men--who will give their best for the service of their fellow men in whatever sphere their

R4873 : page 346

lives may be cast. The world has grown wiser (?) since those days. Today a Daniel would not get into such a position of influence; or if, perchance, he did get there, it would be a miracle if he were not removed--such a miracle as has kept Judge Lindsay of Colorado in office for several years in spite of every pressure of high handed politics which has sought to crush him because of his faithfulness to the principles of righteousness.

Although Babylon has passed away, although few of us can be Daniels or have his high position and wonderful opportunity, nevertheless the thing that is really needed is the Daniel spirit, and that is a possibility with every man and with every woman--young or old. "Dare to be a Daniel!" Alas! how few appreciate the privilege, how few are emulating the Daniel spirit.

Christians throughout this Age are in a condition very similar to that of Daniel. The great King of Glory has them in the school of Christ. He wishes to select a few to be joint heirs in the Messianic Kingdom when it shall be established. The test of examination will come in the end of this Age. Those who will then be found worthy will be such as have had the Daniel spirit of devotion to God and to the principles of righteousness--willing to lay down their lives in the service of the Truth--followers in the footsteps of Jesus. Of these the Lord speaks, saying, "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up My jewels."--Mal. 3:17.

"WHEREBY THY BROTHER STUMBLETH"

Our text gives the thought that in addition to our consideration of what is best for ourselves in the way of food and drink, to enable us to best serve the Lord, we should also have a mind as to the effect of our influence on our neighbors. The more noble our characters the greater will be our influence upon those who are naturally weaker. And that influence should always be used for the good of others, for the lifting up of the highest possible standards of thought, word and deed. Whatever will assist us in this direction

should be considered, and should be to us as a command from God, who has said, "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith."

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R4873 : page 346

THE FIERY FURNACE

--DANIEL 3.--SEPTEMBER 17.--

"The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."--Heb. 13:6.

YEARS PASSED after the narrative of our last study. King Nebuchadnezzar had advanced the four Hebrew captives to positions of honor and trust. Just where Daniel was at this time we do not know, but his three companions, given new names, were governors of Babylonian provinces.

Nebuchadnezzar had conquered the world. He was the first to grasp the thought of the wisdom of having a universal government which would make wars to cease to the ends of the earth. He conquered the world and treated their rulers who were obedient with a measure of wisdom and justice and cruelly destroyed the others as a lesson illustrative of his indomitable power. His Kingdom, composed of various nations worshipping various gods, he wished to cement into one harmonious whole. He instituted

R4874 : page 346

a great peace celebration and brought his representatives from different parts of the then civilized world to Babylon; and with them came representatives of all nations. These were to be duly impressed with the greatness and magnificence of the Babylonian Power and of the futility of resisting it. They were to be given an illustration of the benefactions to result from having one government and having the entire world at peace.

Thus seen it was benevolence as well as wisdom which was at the foundation of Nebuchadnezzar's scheme. He had doubtless heard that the Israelites from of old were inspired by a certain promise from their God that at a future time their nation should be made the dominant one for the ruling and the blessing of all nations, kindreds, peoples and tongues. Nebuchadnezzar considered this theory of the Jews a wise one, and himself the opportune person to be the blesser of the world in the name of his god, Bel-Merodach. Had not his god given him victories, he reasoned? Were not he, therefore, and his nation, the properly qualified ones for the great work of blessing the world? He would at least make the endeavor,

no matter what the cost.

GOLDEN IMAGE OF BEL-MERODACH

Nebuchadnezzar would honor the god whom he believed had given him his victories. He would make him the god of nations. The people from every part of his domain should be committed to the worship of this one god, that the having of one religion might help to cement the various incongruous elements of which his kingdom was composed. As a preparation for the great peace festival, a broad plain for maneuvers of the troops and gathering of the princes and nobles and visitors was selected. In the midst of the plain a golden image of Bel-Merodach was erected--ninety feet high. It is not necessary to assume that the image was of solid gold, although Herodotus mentions a statue at Babylon of smaller size which was of solid gold, weighing forty-three thousand pounds.

When the great day of celebration came, with the governors, princes, captains and provincial rulers, the judges, treasurers, counselors and lawyers in their various robes of office and surrounded and interspersed with the delegates from various nations, the banners flying and the musical instruments playing, it must have been an impressive sight. We may sympathize with the victorious Nebuchadnezzar in a certain measure of pride in the achievements of that hour and the peace program which it was to celebrate. Thus far his rule had been one of conquest; thenceforth, everything conquered, the world was to have a great time of peace, prosperity, jubilation.

At the appropriate time the religious unity of the empire was to be demonstrated by a general worship of the golden image of Bel-Merodach. Proclamation was made that soon the bands would begin to play and that then all would be expected to fall down and worship and reverence the image which represented Nebuchadnezzar, in that it represented his god.

DISLOYALTY! INGRATITUDE! TREASON!

Everything seemed to go well until it was reported to the king that three governors whom he had set over provinces had rebelled against his decree and refused to worship the image of Bel-Merodach--had defied the king's power--for like all mandates of olden times, the penalty for disobedience was so severe as to leave no room for opposition in a sane mind. Who were these three disturbers of Babylon's peace, spoilers of the great peace festival? They were the three young Hebrews whom the

R4874 : page 347

king had so graciously treated at the time of their captivity, who apparently owed so much to him. He had not only given them schooling, but he had exalted them to

high positions in his empire. How ungrateful to their benefactor, how traitorous they were!

This, undoubtedly, was Nebuchadnezzar's view of the affair. Of all the governors he would be most sorry to lose these three who were so reliable, but on such an occasion he could never permit insubordination to his regulations, nor could he think it possible that these three men, now about thirty-five years of age, would challenge his authority and power knowing, as they must, his autocracy. The king, in further leniency, would give these headstrong governors further chance for their lives--for their all. The trumpets would again sound, and if they still persisted, the decree of death must be executed against them. The fiery furnace was ready.

The courage of these three Hebrews stands out on the pages of history as sublime. The king reminded them that none of the gods had been able to deliver any people out of his hand; their own city, Jerusalem, had been overthrown. They could hope for no succor, no rescue from the death that was before them if they persisted in defying the king of the whole earth. Their answer was that their God, Jehovah, they were sure was quite able to deliver them from the fiery furnace, or from anything He might choose, and would do so. But if not--if He did not deliver them--and if they were certain of it in advance--nevertheless, they would be His faithful servants and worship Him alone. How sublime their faith and their courage! Such faith and such courage we may be sure is pleasing to the Lord. We must not expect that in every case God will thus deliver those who trust in Him; rather, as these Hebrews intimated, we are not able to know the wise plans of our God, nor what may be His will respecting what little remains of our lives. But of His power and love we are confident. We can trust Him where we cannot trace Him.

THE FURNACE SUPER-HEATED

When we read that King Nebuchadnezzar became furious, we should sympathetically remember the circumstances. He had conquered the world, and would he now be defied by three men whom he had made what they were? He was giving a great lesson to all nations on the very subject of the necessity of obedience to his government. Could he allow some of his own representatives to defy that government? On the other hand, his appreciation of the men he was about to slay had been evidenced by the exaltation he had given them. Can we wonder that under all these conditions he felt furious? He was seriously disappointed at the only inharmony that had occurred in connection with his great project which he felt sure was to work such blessings to all the earth, and such honor to himself. In his fury he commanded that the furnace should be made seven times hotter--evidently forgetting that thereby the sufferings of anything cast therein would be diminished.

Recent explorations show that in that vicinity there were naphtha wells; for all we know this may have been the fuel used in the great, open furnace. The three Hebrews were bound in their clothing, and some of the strongest men of the king's guard were commanded to throw them into the furnace. As the bound men were thrown in, the flames came forth and enveloped those who had thrown them in, and destroyed them. A Jewish legend tells that the fire streamed out seventy-five feet, perhaps driven by a gust of wind, or perhaps occasioned by the simultaneous throwing in of additional fuel, especially if that fuel was naphtha. The king already had had some evidence of the power of Jehovah God, and intently watched the furnace. But surely the young Hebrews who had such faith in Him were foolish. Yet as the king looked toward the furnace, to his utter astonishment he beheld four persons walking in the midst of the fire, unharmed. He went as close as safety would permit, saying to his counselors, "We cast three men into the furnace, but behold, I now see four, free, walking in the fire, and the fourth has an appearance like a son of the gods!"

What had he done? What should he now do? He called to the three, "Ye servants of the Most High God, come forth and come hither." They came, unharmed, and not even the smell of scorching was upon their clothing. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged the miracle and praised the God who had thus by His angel of power delivered His servants that trusted in Him and who defied the king's mandates and yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God. "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

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R4874 : page 347

IN A DEN OF LIONS

--DANIEL 6.--SEPTEMBER 24.--

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

AT THE TIME of this study Daniel was an old man. He had been long in service, wise and faithful in his administration of the government entrusted to him. He had seen the Babylonian Dynasty perish. In its place came the empire of the Medes and Persians. By these also Daniel's grand character was recognized--his loyalty to principle, his faithfulness as a public servant, his obedience to God and the principles of righteousness. The new Universal Empire was divided into one hundred and twenty provinces with

one hundred and twenty governors. Over these were three presidents. Over these presidents was King Darius,

R4875 : page 347

above whom, as chief emperor, was Cyrus. Daniel was one of the three presidents, made such because of his recognized integrity and ability.

What a compliment was thus paid to this noble, consecrated Jew, and how the recognition of his ability marks the breadth of mind of some of the rulers of the past! Their desire to have such a man in high repute and authority seems to evidence their good intentions in respect to the governing of the world. Indeed, we believe that this is true also of many noble minded, modern monarchs--that they give to their subjects the best government of which they are capable, according to their own imperfect judgments.

That which will specially mark Messiah's Kingdom will be that it will not only have perfect ideals in respect to human government, but that it will be backed by Divine power, before which every knee shall bow and every tongue shall eventually confess.--Phil. 2:10,11.

ENVIIOUS OF DANIEL

From all that we know of the governments of the Orient, present and past, they have been full of dishonesty, of what in our day is designated "graft." As an illustration: it is said that in the China-Japan war,

R4875 : page 348

contracts for cannon and other war materials were given to manufacturers closely allied to government officials, and that the most shame-faced dishonesty was practiced--for instance, that wooden cannon were delivered and mounted upon fortifications, while the contract money, which was paid for the genuine article, went to the thieves. A man like Daniel, in so important a place as that which he occupied as one of the three presidents or supervisors of a great empire, was sure to be in the way of grafters--a hinderer of their schemes. Realizing that he could not be deposed, the first step was to find some fault with him which would secure his removal; but the man's integrity and uprightness in general gave no hope in this direction.

Finally a scheme was concerted. They knew that Daniel's religion lay at the foundation of his entire course in life. They must involve him along the line of his devotion to his God or not at all. King Darius, like every other man, was approachable through flattery. It was a custom of the East to closely associate the king with religion. He was supposedly a favorite with his god, else he would not enjoy so high a station.

Working upon this theory, the conspirators, high in

office, approached the king with a project which they assured him would help to make strong and united the various parts of his empire. It was this: that the king should be recognized for a month as the only channel of mediation or access between his subjects and their god or gods. The claim was that such a recognition would elevate the dignity of the throne in the minds of the people. King Darius of course felt flattered and at once agreed to the arrangement and issued an order to that effect--never for a moment thinking of what might be the result in the case of Daniel; and never for a moment suspecting that his counselors were seeking to entrap him and to legally accomplish the death of his most trusted officer.

PRAYED THREE TIMES DAILY

Daniel heard of the decree, but altered not his usual custom of praying three times every day before a window of his house which looked out toward Jerusalem. Morning, noon and night he remembered his God and remembered his vows of faithfulness to Him and called to mind the gracious promises respecting the Holy Land, that it would yet be the center of the whole earth and of God's holy people; that eventually, through these, Divine blessings would be extended to every nation, people, kindred and tongue.

Some one has remarked that, as the sharpening of scythes in harvest time does not mean lost time or energy, so also time spent in prayer is not lost as respects the affairs of life. Unquestionably the best men and women in the world are those who pray, and pray regularly, who bow the knee, as did Daniel. Unquestionably the moments thus taken from earthly affairs are well spent and bring more than commensurate blessings upon the worshiper and all with which he has to do. Unquestionably it is impossible to live a consecrated life in neglect of prayer. What would Daniel have been without his praying time! How would his faith in God have persisted in that heathen land? How would his loyalty to principle have maintained itself in the midst of corruption had it not been for his communion with his Maker? To the Christian this privilege is still further enhanced by a realization that "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous," in whose all-prevailing Name we may approach with courage the throne of heavenly grace, and obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.--Heb. 4:16.

JEHOVAH SENT HIS ANGEL

The conspirators were on the lookout for Daniel. They had witnesses ready to testify, not that they had seen Daniel do anything wrong, but that he had violated the edict which the king had been entrapped into making and signing. The matter was laid before the king and

he was reminded that it was one of the principles of the empire that even the king himself could not change or alter an edict once sent forth. King Darius felt himself bound hand and foot and ensnared--trapped. All day he sought means whereby he could avert the consequences of his royal mandate, but he found none. He explained the matter to Daniel, assuring him that he believed that his God was able to deliver him. What a beautiful testimony to the uprightness of Daniel's life!

Daniel was cast into the lion's den and the stone for a door was secured with thongs, the knots of which were sealed with the king's signet, a safeguard against its being tampered with. That night, we are told, was one of great distress to the king. He could think only of his faithful officer, the noble man so unrighteously treated. He was ashamed of the part which he felt compelled to take in the matter. He was abroad early in the morning, after a sleepless night, to call to Daniel, to learn whether or not he were still alive. His joy of heart was great when he learned that he was still safe, that his God had sent His angel to stop the lions' mouths. Daniel was soon lifted from the pit! Daniel was vindicated! His God was vindicated! And the king now made another decree--that those counselors who had thus sought the life of a faithful man should themselves be put to the test by being cast into the same den of lions; and this in their case meant destruction, as the result proved.

Oh, that every Christian could and would live as high above the world's standards as did Daniel, so that their enemies might see clearly that they have no ground for charges except those to their credit; that their God whom they serve is indeed the true God.

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R4875 : page 348

WHO WERE TYPIFIED BY THE LEVITES?

THE LEVITES typified the "Church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven." This statement--their "names are written in heaven"--implies that they are recognized as a spiritual class--have come into Divine favor.

We are given the history of the Levites as a typical tribe specially representing the first-born; and this history of the first-born refers us back to the time when the first-born of the tribe of Israel were spared on the night of the passover. That night symbolizes this Gospel Age, the time of darkness on the earth, when the Lord is taking out His jewel class. This "Church of the First-born" have passed from death unto life--all of these first-born, representing the entire "Church of the First-born,"

are represented in the tribe of Levi. Out from amongst these Levites were selected the priestly few, typifying our Lord and those who are faithfully walking in His steps. So the entire "Church of the First-born" will include a great multitude--more than the Body of Christ. The virgins who follow her (Psa. 45:14), all belong to this "Church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven." The work of the Levites in connection with

R4875 : page 349

the Tabernacle service is, undoubtedly, a symbolical one.

The high priest "went alone once every year"--on the Day of Atonement--into the Most Holy. Apparently the under-priests did not go into the Most Holy on this day (Heb. 9:6,7), but into the first Holy, where were the candlestick and the table of shewbread and the golden altar of incense. They, doubtless, typified those who are seated with Christ in the heavenly (Eph. 2:6), and are thus much in advance of the general household of faith. The under-priests were the sons of Aaron, and, being of the priestly family, or household, occupied a higher position and had greater rights and privileges than were enjoyed by the remainder of the Levites. The picture of the under-priests going into the Holy seems to correspond to our experiences of the present time and not to our experiences of the future, when we expect to enter into the Most Holy through the rent veil.

The experiences of the antitypical Levites at the present time are different from what they will be in the future. At the present time they are in the Court condition, because only the members of the Body are privileged to go into the Holy and to know "the deep things of God." But when the articles of the Holy had been wrapped up, the typical Levites bore the precious things --were allowed to carry them. They could feel that they had a right to touch them in a general way, but not in

R4876 : page 349

the same way as the priests. This would seem to imply that none except those who are walking in the footsteps of Jesus could have a deep, full appreciation of the Divine Plan. Others might understand these things in a comparative degree, but not in their fulness.

We are to consider, then, that as the Levites performed a service in connection with the Atonement Day sacrifices, so they will have a special service after the Day of Atonement. On the Day of Atonement, when the people were waiting for the priest to come out and bless them, was not the particular time for the Levites in general to teach the people or for them to learn their important lesson; but, after this Day of Atonement, the Levites were the general teachers of all the people, explaining the Law to them. And so we see that this will be a part of the work of the antitypical Levites in the

future. They will have no inheritance in the land and its blessings. They will be associated in the Kingdom work and in the instruction of the people. But just how this will be done we may not now definitely know.

We might also understand that the Levites in the Court very fittingly represent all those who desire to turn from sin and approach God and who are making progress toward complete justification. They are in a justified attitude from the moment they turn from sin and come into the Court. This implies faith and obedience. And so all who are in harmony with God in any sense of the word are, tentatively, Levites; but as to whether they will become actual Levites depends on whether they make entire consecration. If they do not make this consecration they will not receive the special blessings which would entitle them to the spirit plane. We all were in this sense of the word Levites--in the sense of approaching justification, desiring justification, desiring harmony with God and seeking it, putting away the filth of the flesh, etc.--but we did not reach that justification until we presented our bodies living sacrifices and were begotten of the Holy Spirit and the new life was begun by which we passed from death unto life, by which we became the "Church of the First-born" and had our names written in heaven. Any who turn back before presenting their bodies living sacrifices fail to reach the fulness of justification, fail to have the justification to life--they fail in degree of faithfulness to right principle and in degree of harmony with God.

While the Court condition seems to represent at the present time all those who are approaching God and loving righteousness and desiring harmony with Him, it appears as though, with the closing of this Age, there will be an adjustment of matters by which all those who have not come to the point of full consecration and to the point of Spirit-begetting, who would not belong to the household of faith and to the "Church of the First-born," in the absolute sense, will go out and cease to be recognized as in the Court. Meantime, the class who have already made consecration, "presented their bodies living sacrifices," and received the begetting of the Spirit and enjoyed for a time the privileges of being members of the Body of Christ--these, failing to maintain their standing, are represented as separate from the "little flock" class, at the end of this Age. Their condition apparently is represented by the Court condition thereafter.

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R4876 : page 349

COVETOUS CONVERSATION

"Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have."--Heb. 13:5.

THE Authorized Version of the Bible uses the word conversation in the broad sense of conduct, including, not only the words, but the looks and the acts of life. The force of the text, therefore, is, Let your conduct be without covetousness. How could a covetous thought affect our conduct? As some see others possessed of larger wealth or larger opportunities in the service of the Lord, of better conveniences than they possess, or who are better looking than themselves, etc., they have a spirit, or disposition, of covetousness, dissatisfaction with what Divine providence has shaped for them.

When we say, "what Divine providence has shaped for them," we do not mean that one should make no endeavor for advancement. If a person is happy, he should still strive to attain to something more than he possesses. A certain amount of ambition is laudable. The ambition against which the Apostle is speaking is that of a dissatisfied heart, mind, overlooking the blessings already possessed and desiring the things that he has not. Rather, such a one should say, God could grant greater blessings to me if He chose. I am His child and what, therefore, He grants me in the way of reward for my endeavors must be all right. I shall not envy others their possessions; but I shall wait for the Lord and believe that what He gives me is best for me, and much better than anything I could carve out for myself.

Covetousness is a desire to have, keep, enjoy--especially applied to something that belongs to another and which we do not possess. The principle of covetousness is a principle of selfish desire. It may manifest itself in two ways: First, when it extends to another man's goods; and, second, when it pertains to things already in our possession. This is specially true of Christians, who have given themselves and all they have to the Lord. From the moment of such consecration all the powers possessed or to be possessed belong to the Lord; and to seek to use these for one's self and to refuse to use them in the

page 350

service of the Lord would be holding back what belongs to the Lord according to our own arrangement with Him. What distribution should be made of whatever one may have, as the Lord's steward, is to be left to the individual himself. Under some very special conditions another might give counsel, in the way of helping a brother to do a service which he was apparently overlooking, or respecting an element of character which the brother was evidently cultivating, contrary to the spirit of his covenant of sacrifice.

Some of the Lord's dear children fail to realize their privileges of (1) sacrifice, and (2) the cultivation of the spirit of contentment and generosity. There are some

who, after being well fed on spiritual manna, permit a selfish craving or a covetous spirit to interrupt their fellowship with the Lord to some extent, hankering for earthly, fleshly, good things, forgetting the wisdom of their Leader, the Lord, and that His love, which has thus far delivered them and fed and led them, is still with them, the same as ever. Sometimes the covetousness is a repining against their lot in life, a desire for more ease and comfort and wealth and social influence than are within reach. Sometimes it is a protest against their share of the aches and pains of the groaning creation and their inability to get rid of these. Sometimes it is a protest against the illness and death of a loved one.

How unwise! Should not those who have been fed on the spiritual manna realize that all of Spiritual Israel's affairs are under the Lord's special supervision? Should they not remember that "He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men," but for their good? (Lam. 3:33; Heb. 12:10.) Ah! some have found that the prayers of murmurers, even when answered, have brought unexpected drawbacks.

Covetous (selfish) prayers are too expensive. Some have gained wealth and lost the Truth and its service. Some have gained health only to find that with it they gained trials no less severe. Some have had their dear ones restored to them from the very jaws of death, only to wish afterwards that God had not answered their payers, or more correctly, to wish that they had accepted the Lord's wisdom and providences trustfully, contentedly, uncomplainingly. Spiritual Israel should use wisely such things as are within their reach, accepting all as God's gifts with thanksgiving. Their petitions should be for spiritual gifts, including patient endurance and heart contentment, accompanied with heartfelt thanks for blessings already received.

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R4876 : page 350

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BULLOCK'S BLOOD

Questions.--What did the blood of the bullock represent?

Answer.--The blood presented in the Most Holy represented the life, or life-rights of the one sacrificed; but the blood itself was a symbol of death. When blood is in the veins it is a symbol of life. The blood of the bullock and, subsequently, the blood of the goat, in the hands of the priest, symbolically said, This animal is dead, and here is a proof of it. So the presentation of the blood meant the presentation of this sacrificed life with all the rights appertaining thereto.

Our Lord had certain life-rights when He died. The

expression life-rights may properly be used also in connection with an individual who does not have life in the full sense, but who has made a full consecration and has been accepted by the Lord. Such a one is reckoned as having passed from death unto life. In the moment of his having righteousness imputed to him, he passes from death unto life. The Advocate has imputed to that one

R4877 : page 350

a sufficiency of His merit to compensate for any deficiency; he is thus rendered acceptable and is then in a reckonedly complete condition. He then has life-rights; and it is those life-rights that are said to be sacrificed, or presented to God. In this manner the person may be said to become a member of the great High Priest's Body. Christ imputes to him a sufficiency of merit to compensate for his demerit; and having been made acceptable to the Father by this imputation, he becomes a member of the Body of the great High Priest.

There is a difference between offering our sacrifice and presenting ourselves. Not we, but the High Priest accepts one as a member of His Body, He imputes to that one a sufficiency of His merit to give him life-rights. By virtue of being reckoned perfect, one has life-rights, a condition which permits him to be a sacrifice.

All those life-rights which our Lord possessed when He died were symbolically represented in the blood of the bullock; and with that blood the sprinkling was done in the Most Holy.

There was just one moment when the knife in the hand of the high priest smote and slew the bullock. That moment represented the moment when our Lord, at Jordan, became dead as a man and alive as a New Creature, when "He, through the eternal Spirit, offered up Himself without spot to God." But it was not as a New Creature that He offered up Himself, but as the man Christ Jesus. His spotless humanity was what He there offered. This He did through the eternal Spirit of Sonship and loyalty to God; and this was the opportune moment, the moment foretold in prophecy. Then He was acknowledged a Priest. If Christ were on earth, on the earthly plane, He could not be a priest according to the flesh, not being of the family of Aaron. The only Order of Priesthood, therefore, to which He belonged was a spiritual Order, the one mentioned in the Scripture which says: "Thou art a Priest forever after the Order of Melchizedek." (Psa. 110:4.) He was not a Priest according to the flesh, but as a New Creature.

The High Priest came into his office by virtue of his work of sacrifice. The bringing of the bullock into the Court meant its presentation for sacrificial purposes. So with Jesus. When He came to John at Jordan, He made a surrender of Himself. This the Father acknowledged. The disciples of the Lord presented themselves, but they were neither accepted as sacrifices nor begotten of the

Spirit, until Pentecost. On that day, while they were waiting, God accepted the sacrifice, and made them priests at that moment.

THE IMPUTATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Question.--Does Christ impute His righteousness to the members of His Body?

Answer.--When we say that our Lord imputes His righteousness, we are not to think that He gives His own righteousness as the High Priest, but that He imputes the merit of His human sacrifice on our behalf. When, as the Man Christ Jesus, He laid down His life, without being under sentence of death in any degree, there was a merit in that sacrifice. The early life-rights, which the Lord laid down, were to His credit, giving Him

R4877 : page 351

the power of restitution for the world of mankind, the power for their regeneration. But before the merit of that sacrifice is given to the world, it is made the basis of our justification, for the covering of our imperfections. It could have been used for us in restitution, but such was not God's Plan during this Age. Hence, Jesus' merit is imputed to believers who consecrate, and also covers the blemishes and unwitting trespasses of their imperfect earthen vessels to the end of their course.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND MERIT

Question.--What distinction would you make between the righteousness of our Lord and His merit?

Answer.--The righteousness of our Lord was His right-doing, His right conduct, His perfect character while He was theman, while He was on trial. The merit is the Divine appreciation, the Divine estimation of that character, of that right-doing. Since He ceased to be a man, our Lord has, of course, no righteousness as a human being. That righteousness which was His before His consecration and which He maintained, constitutes a merit in the Divine sight, which is imputed to the Church now, and which is to be utilized by Him in the blotting out of the sins of the whole world, shortly. It is a sufficiency of merit; for one man was sentenced to death and, later, another man was passed upon as worthy of life. This merit, therefore, this value of laying down a life not worthy of death, is at His disposal in the Divine arrangement.

SHOULD BE APPLIED ANTITYPICALLY

Question.--Have we any Scripture to show that the Aaronic priesthood will exercise their priestly office in the Millennial Age?

Answer.--One Scripture that might be understood so to teach is found in the book of Malachi, which says that when the Lord shall come into His Temple, "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."--Mal. 3:3.

Some might apply this Scripture to the sons of Levi in a literal way. But we think that it is antitypical, that the Church constitutes the Levitical system and that these are the spiritual Levites whom the Purifier will make ready, that they may offer unto God an acceptable sacrifice, as antitypical Levites and a Royal Priesthood.

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page 351

BEREAN QUESTIONS IN SCRIPTURE STUDIES

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

SEPTEMBER 3

(126) Does the foregoing signify that the sisters may never explain to others "the good tidings of great joy?" P. 267, par. 2.

(127) What is the Apostle's advice regarding woman's attitude in Church gatherings for worship and praise? P. 268, par. 1.

(128) To what kind of Church gatherings did the Apostle's restrictions evidently relate? P. 268, par. 2,3.

(129) Did the Apostle Paul favor the "woman's rights" idea? P. 269, par. 1.

(130) What argument on this subject can be drawn from Eph. 4:11,12, noting the gender indicated in the Greek? P. 269, par. 2.

(131) Would it be considered "teaching" for a sister to quote the words of the Lord or the Apostles upon any subject under discussion, or to read or refer to recognized publications explanatory of the Scriptures? P. 270, par. 1.

SEPTEMBER 10

(132) What is evidently the beautiful and appropriate symbolism of this Divine order in the Church, "Let her be covered?" P. 270, par. 2.

(133) What was there in the dress of the High Priest and the under priests which typified this sex-distinction? P. 271, par. 1.

(134) Explain the Apostle's teaching with respect to the sisters wearing a head covering, as stated in 1 Cor. 11:3-7,10-15. P. 271, par. 2.

(135) Was this a Divine command? and are there good reasons for perpetuating this custom? P. 271, par. 3.

(136) Briefly summarizing, what are the liberties and the limitations of sisters in the Ecclesia? P. 272.

SEPTEMBER 17

(1) Although the entire Church throughout the world is one, how should each separate Ecclesia be considered, and conduct itself? P. 237, par. 1.

(2) How is each congregation to recognize all other Ecclesias, and expect the Lord to provide for the needs of the Church as a whole? P. 273, par. 2.

(3) While thus looking for special instruments to be used of the Lord, what should be the attitude of the Church toward all such and their teachings? P. 274, par. 1.

(4) What Scriptural authority for expecting one general channel of instruction at the Lord's second presence, and how does this affect the individual Ecclesias with respect to order, discipline, etc.? P. 274, par. 2.

(5) In the selection of elders for an Ecclesia, what should be the qualifications of those who attempt to express the mind of the Lord by voting? P. 275, par. 1.

SEPTEMBER 24

ORDAINING ELDERS IN EVERY CHURCH.

(6) What is the significance of the word ordain in Acts 14:23? P. 276, par. 1.

(7) Is the same Greek word used by the Lord and the Apostles with respect to the ordination of the Apostles, and indeed of every member of the New Creation? P. 276, par. 2.

(8) What was the custom of the early Church? Cite two instances of this method. P. 276, par. 3.

(9) Is there no other word mentioned in the New Testament as signifying to give authority or permission to preach, as the word ordain is now generally used and understood? P. 277, par. 2 to P. 278, par. 3.

(10) What spirit is responsible for the division into "clergy" and "laity?" P. 278, par. 4, first part.

R4885 : page 351

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page 354

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page 353

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CONTENTS

Views From "The Watch Tower".....	355
Speaking-With-Tongues Delusion.....	355
Unrest in China.....	355
The Matter With the Churches.....	355
Persecutions of Jews Continues.....	357
The Judgment of the Angels.....	358
Some of Them Probably Repentant.....	358
The Word and the Way.....	359
Loyalty the Great Test.....	360
Set as a Watchman.....	361
"River of the Water of Life".....	362
No Bride to Say "Come".....	362
Endless Torments Unscriptural.....	363
"Pray Always".....	364
Independent Bible Study.....	365
Faith, Not Sight.....	365
Some Interesting Letters.....	366
Testimony Meetings--Volunteer Work.....	366
Berean Questions in Scripture Studies.....	367

page 354

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BETHEL HYMNS FOR OCTOBER

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 October follow: (1) 273; (2)

165; (3) 328; (4) 12; (5) 308; (6) 202; (7) 1; (8) 91; (9) 59; (10) 299; (11) 8; (12) 286; (13) 170; (14) 259; (15) 177; (16) 293; (17) 283; (18) 159; (19) 106; (20) 112; (21) 105; (22) 130; (23) 79; (24) 214; (25) 119; (26) 332; (27) 108; (28) 95; (29) 51; (30) 230; (31) 313.

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R4877 : page 355

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

"SPEAKING-WITH-TONGUES" DELUSION

WE HAVE heretofore referred to some earnest people who are evidently ensnared by the Adversary into believing that they are enjoying a restoration of the gifts whereby God blessed and established the Christian Church in the first century. Their strong delusions continue to increase under a spirit power which, we believe, is not from God nor from the dead, but from the fallen spirits, the fallen angels. In addition to the speaking with tongues and the miraculous healing of the sick and the seeing of visions, they now have spirit manifestations. Their latest claims, reported in their religious journals, are that the Lord Jesus, on several occasions, has appeared in their midst at their meetings, has been seen with the natural eye, etc.

That these people are earnest and evidently honest only increases our sorrow for them. (For dishonest people we have comparatively little sympathy.) We fear that a later development will be spirit manifestations of a still more pronounced type. The fallen angels are evidently desirous of deluding the whole world. They have certainly had great success, so far as many of the false doctrines are concerned. And as we read the Scriptures we believe they will for a time have a still greater influence in human affairs shortly. Those of our readers who have contact with any of these deluded people should point out to them the Apostle's words, "Believe not every spirit," and should remind them that the fallen angels are "lying spirits," and that the entire confidence of God's people should be in the teachings of the Scriptures.

The Scriptures clearly testify that those who possessed the gifts of the Spirit in the early Church received them from the Apostles by the laying on of hands, so that when the Apostles were dead and also those upon whom they had laid their hands and communicated the gifts, it ended those "gifts" in the Church. And the next step of progress was the manifestation of the fruits of the

Spirit, as St. Paul most clearly points out.--I Cor. 13:8.

UNREST IN CHINA--BRITISH UNFAITHFUL

Bishop W. B. Lewis, of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Foo Chow, China, discussing recent trouble and present unrest in the Canton Province, says:--

"The real root of the trouble is because the Chinese government has suppressed the growing of poppy. In 1906, England and China entered into a treaty to suppress the opium traffic. The terms of the treaty were that England was to decrease the importation of opium one tenth each year and China agreed to suppress the growing of poppy in the same ratio.

"China has lived up to the terms of the treaty and England has not. In consequence of this the price of opium in China has increased fourfold and the result is that millions of dollars are flowing out of the country and nothing is coming in. All the time England is profiting by the condition as it now is. The residents of a large part of Southern China do not understand the treaty and hence the rebellion was brought about. However, the present condition will not continue much longer, as the British government cannot face the world because of failure to abide by the terms of the treaty. I believe the English are coming to the realization that this condition cannot go forward, and I believe developments will occur in the near future. The final outcome will be that England will have to abide by the terms of the treaty and then the

R4878 : page 355

opium traffic will cease. The Chinese government will effectively suppress the growing of poppy."

THE MATTER WITH THE CHURCHES

"What's the matter with the churches?" says the Toledo News-Bee: "It's only those who will not see who are sanguine enough to maintain that there is nothing the matter with them. For it is blazoned in actual fact, so that he who runs may read, that the churches, judged merely by what they have done outside of the spiritual realm, in the way of civic and social betterment, have failed thus far to show adequate results for the enormous sums they have invested in buildings, and for the preaching of the gospel at home and abroad.

"Dr. Thomas E. Green, writing in Hampton's on 'What Is to Become of the Preacher?' says:--

"That of the 90,000,000 people in this country, 32,936,446 are church members (census report of 1906).

"That of the 1,440,000,000 people in the world, a billion,

one thousand million, are not Christians.

"That church attendance is falling off. It needs neither figures nor argument to establish the fact that church attendance and church worship are in a condition of decline. The experience of any community is ample proof.

"That since 1905 the collections in London churches have fallen off 35 per cent.

"That not five per cent. of the workingmen of England and America attend church.

R4878 : page 356

"That the supply of ministers is rapidly falling off.'

"So much for that part of it. Now for the other: The average American minister earns less than half the wages of the average American bricklayer.

"Americans give more liberally for missions than for home work, but for every dollar put in the 'foreign field' for actual mission work, more than another dollar is spent in administration. Of the ten million dollars contributed in this country for missions last year, less than five million dollars got to the 'heathen.'

"Taking a certain Wisconsin town of 2,700 inhabitants as representative, we are shown 13 church organizations, the largest numbering 225 communicants, the smallest 25, keeping up 11 church buildings at an aggregate cost of \$10,400 per year. 'There are in the United States 14 kinds of Baptists, 24 kinds of Lutherans, 15 kinds of Methodists and 12 kinds of Presbyterians,' says Dr. Green.

"To cap the climax with a final absurdity he cites the fact that there is a lone southern Methodist church on the Manitoba border and an equally lonesome northern Presbyterian church languishing in the beach of the gulf of Mexico."

* * *

The Toledo News-Bee concludes its editorial above by saying, "It seems clear as daylight that the salvation of the sects lies in Christian co-operation."

Just so. The disease is apparent, but the real cause and the proper remedy are not discerned. Why should we plan for the salvation of the sects? Should we not rather strive for the salvation of the people who for so long have been confused and misled in various directions by the sects and the creeds of the "dark ages"? If everybody agrees that our Lord and the Apostles recognized only the true Church, "the Church of the living God whose names are written in heaven," and if all the division of God's people into sects and parties with contradictory creeds has been wrong, why should any of us seek to uphold or to save the sects from destruction? Surely all true Christians should unite in abolishing sectarianism, each by destroying his own creed fences, which separate God's professed people into various more or less antagonistic

little companies.

The proposition of Church Federation is merely a method of sect salvation, preservation, the very thing which no true Christians should desire. We are told that Federation would ignore doctrines altogether and merely make of the different sects a social and working combination along lines upon which all could agree. But is this the Divine order? Would not this be substituting the commandments of men, the Federation, for the doctrines of Christ? Should we not, therefore, rather remember the Apostle's words which assure us, not only that there is but one Church of the living God, but also that there is but one Lord, one faith and one baptism, one God and Father over all and one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?-- Eph. 4:5,6.

Manifestly it is our duty to abandon all of our various creeds formulated after the death of the Apostles and to go back to the words of Jesus, the Apostles and Prophets and to accept and believe these as the Divine revelation of the Divine will and purposes. Some may incline to say:--

YOU ARE A CATHOLIC!

In the sense that the word catholic signifies general instead of sectarian, the charge would be correct; but we are not Roman Catholic any more than Anglican Catholic. Nor were Jesus and the Apostles Roman, Greek or Anglican Catholics. They were catholics in a broader sense. And we strive to take a similar position, ignoring national as well as sectarian boundaries and lines and authority. The broad term Christian, without any limitations, includes the catholic or general thought and is quite sufficient for us and, we believe, should be sufficient for all of the followers of Jesus.

But someone will ask, When you speak of the one true Church, do you not necessarily mean the Roman Catholic Church? Oh, no, my friend; there were plain Christians before there were Roman Catholic Christians or Christians of any of the other various branches. We refer to the one Church which Jesus and the Apostles established on the foundation of their teachings as found in the Holy Scriptures. It did not ignore doctrines, but admonished that we should contend earnestly for the "faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3), which would be sufficient for the man of God.--2 Tim. 3:17.

The one Church of Christ, inspired by the true faith, the true doctrines of the Bible, will be bound together by the cords of love, fellowship, brotherhood, "that they all may be one as Thou, Father, and I are one." (John 17:11.) As our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus do not need to be bound together by fear or threats, so likewise the true members of the true Church will need no such bondage to make them one in spirit or in doctrines, for, as the Master said, "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free." The secret of this true union is that each member of the true Church is fully consecrated

to God and His service and is a saint striving for perfect mastery over his flesh and is begotten of the Holy Spirit and its holy desires for righteousness and truth, taught and providentially overruled and guided to a knowledge of His will and an understanding of His Word. Thus "they shall all be taught of God." This is the Holy Catholic Church. All of its members will be taught of God.

Ah, you say, such a Church of saints would not number four hundred millions as we now boast!

No, we reply; it would be as the Master declares, a "little flock" in comparison to the masses of humanity and the masses of Christianity. But that "little flock" would be burning and shining lights in the world, as the Master declares. The human organizations for benevolent, educational, charitable and other good works there might still be, but, disillusioned, they would no longer style themselves churches, but would know that there is but the one Church.

When we learn to look from the Bible standpoint we see that inside and outside of all the different sects and parties and creeds of Christendom there is just such a "little flock" of saintly footstep followers of Jesus. These are the true Church as God sees it. The human institutions called churches, while containing some of these members of the true Church, are merely social clubs and not churches. There is but one, and it is scattered everywhere, and yet, "The Lord knoweth them that are His."
--2 Tim. 2:19.

THE CHURCH'S WORK FOR THE WORLD

Ah! but, says one, where would come in the Church's work for the world? We reply: God's work for the world will be accomplished through the Church after the Church shall have been completed, changed, glorified, in the Kingdom. God's work in the present time is not the salvation of the world, but the salvation of the Church; the world's salvation will follow by and by during the reign of Messiah for a thousand years, when Satan shall be bound; then every evil influence will be restrained and every good influence let loose.

Now the Church is to make herself ready as the Bride

R4878 : page 357

of Christ. (Rev. 19:7.) Now the individual Christians are called upon to make their calling and election sure. Only incidentally, and not as their chief work, are they to let their light shine before men. Now the Lord's blessing through Apostles, Prophets, evangelists, teachers, is exclusively for the edifying of the saints for the work of the ministry, until we all come to the full stature of the Man--the Christ, the Anointed, of which Jesus will be the Head and the Church the members in glory. (Eph. 4:12-14.) God is not now dealing by force to compel

every knee to bow and every tongue to confess. That will be by and by. Now the still, small Voice is calling the saintly class to separation from the world, to fellowship

R4879 : page 357

with God, to joint-heirship with Jesus in the Kingdom soon to be established "under the whole heavens."

What the world has so much been calling for will soon be realized, namely, a Church Triumphant, a Church in glory and perfection, a Church empowered of God to put down sin, to correct and chasten the sinners and to lead as many as possible of them into ways of righteousness unto everlasting life.

Reverting, then, to the question at the head of this article, "What is the Matter with the Churches," our reply is that the difficulty is due to the formation and perpetuation of various human systems, each trying to palm itself off as the one true Church of Christ. Some time after the formation the self-deception gave way before the saner thought that none of them surely could make such a claim. The next step amongst the Protestant sects was to say, If you will recognize me, I will recognize you, and we will claim that Christ has many churches and ignore His statement that there is but one. This policy has been successful for quite a while. And it would even now be successful were it not that the eyes of human understanding are opening and the inconsistencies of all the various creeds of Christendom are recognized. Now it begins to be manifest that for centuries there has been something radically wrong with the faith, the hope, the baptism and the names of all the different sects; now true Christians of all denominations are perplexed and groping after truth, and so perplexed that they scarcely realize that, to find it, they should go back to the Fountain Head, Jesus and the Apostles and their teachings.

Meantime, also, the masses of Christendom are becoming awakened--they are going into modern infidelity called Higher Criticism, New Thought, Theology, Theosophy, Evolution, Christian Science, etc. Thus, between the perplexity of the saints looking for truth and the nominal masses looking for the truth in other directions, no wonder the sectarian systems are uninteresting except to the comparatively few who, as ministers, officers, etc., "feel it their duty" to attend meeting and to profess creeds which they do not believe.

The real duty of every Christian is to take his stand for the Truth and against sectarianism and its base misrepresentation of the Divine character. With the creed fences down these, the saintly few, would soon come together under the attractions of the green pastures and still waters of the Divine Word. The charities of the world would progress very much as now because the poor, the Master said, we would have always with us until His Kingdom would be established, which will destroy poverty, as well as overthrow sin and death.

THE OUTLOOK IN GERMANY

There is not a serious political mind in Germany today that does not consider the internal conditions as very grave, however different the political views may be. The leaders of the People's party at the decisive debates on the suffrage bill, one after another declared with greatest emphasis that they viewed the situation as very serious; that we are approaching very serious times; this conviction was also shared by the Social Democrats. In fact, the view has already been expressed that we are in an era of revolutionary legislation, of immense and inconceivable political, social and ethical transition. We merely mention this in support of our conviction that the internal conditions of Germany are in reality very serious, and we regard it not as a refutation, but as a confirmation that the sentiment prevailing in Germany is to some extent nervously hysterical and may be characterized partly by that expression which stamped the period preceding the French revolution--*apres nous le deluge* (after us the deluge).--Rheinisch-Westphalian News.

PERSECUTION OF JEWS CONTINUES

In Russia the tale of Jewish persecution continues to unfold itself. The recent political crisis was hailed by the Russian Jews as promising some relief, for it was thought that whatever resulted, the condition of affairs could not grow worse and no regime could exceed in cruelty that of M. Stolypin. In the result, M. Stolypin has remained in office and his myrmidons in different parts of the empire continue their foul work. The order has apparently gone forth that the conscience of Europe is no more to be shocked by massacres, but the same object is to be attained more thoroughly and without any scandal by means of relentless persecution.

Odessa is in particular the center of Jewish persecution of the most heartless description. The anti-Semitic governor of that city has already succeeded in creating a mass of Jewish pauperism, estimated to number 80,000, and at the same time, by seizing the management and the funds of the local Jewish charities, the means of coping with this appalling misery have been destroyed. The Universities of Russia have long been practically closed to Jewish students, but there has been no hindrance of their studying as external students.

Almost the last act of the government previous to the recent crisis was, however, the exclusion of the Jews from the ranks of external students, and nothing that has since happened has served to alter this decree. Thus, the Russian government has now succeeded in depriving

6,000,000 of the most enlightened of the inhabitants of the empire of all means of obtaining higher education. It seems as if the Policy of Pobedonostcheff still holds good --the solution of the Jewish question by the destruction of one-third of the Jewish population, the conversion of a second third, and the migration of the rest.--Exchange.

INCIPIENT AGNOSTICS

The Methodist Recorder notes the lament of Rev. Thomas Payne, D.D., respecting the mischief wrought by the theory of Evolution, especially among the young, and of the teaching of other false doctrines in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes and from many pulpits, as well as by professors in schools and colleges:--

"He asserts that owing to this many young men have given up their reading of the Bible and other books of a religious nature, and gives instances in which young people from Christian families have come home from schools and colleges of this description incipient Agnostics. His avowed object is to help such by leading them back to faith in God and confidence in His Word. He charges the Theory of Evolution with being the chief cause of most of the erroneous teaching of the time; and to its unquestioned acceptance and hasty application he traces the mischief that he laments."

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R4879 : page 358

THE JUDGMENT OF THE ANGELS

THE APOSTLE PAUL asked of the Corinthian Church, "Know ye not that we [the saints] shall judge angels?" (I Cor. 6:3.) We have been frequently asked as to how the saints shall judge angels?

We have given the suggestion that it would not be appropriate for the saints to judge the holy angels, for evidently the holy angels do not need any judgment. In the past there was one judgment of the angels; this is mentioned by St. Peter. (2 Pet. 2:4,5.) He says that in the time before the flood the angels had their trial; and that those angels who did not maintain their condition of loyalty to God were cast down to tartarus-- that is, to our earth's atmosphere, there "restrained in chains of darkness until the Judgment of the Great Day." (See also Jude 6.) This "Judgment of the Great Day," to our understanding, means that in that Great Day another trial will come to those angels.

The question might arise as to what will be the character of and when will be that "Great Day"? We answer

that the Great Day is the Seventh Day. God divided the history of man, apparently, into seven great epochs of 1,000 years each. Six days (1,000-year days) of this great Week are in the past; the Seventh Day is the Last Day (1,000 years long, as are the other six). So this Last Day is the Great Day of Messiah--of the Kingdom of Messiah--in which He will rule and reign in the world for its judgment, uplifting and blessing. That will be the Great Day, in comparison with other days; the Sabbath Day, as compared with the six days of trouble and unrest that the world has experienced. In that Day peace and rest will come to the world, for Christ who takes the Kingdom will bring everything into subjection. To Him "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess." --Phil. 2:10,11.

So in connection with that Great Day, humanity is to have a judgment--"He (Jehovah) hath appointed a Day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained." (Acts 17:31.) The great "Man" God has ordained is Jesus the Head and the Church His Body, of which the Apostle says some are Jews and some are Gentiles--"to make of the twain (Jews and Gentiles) one New Man"--the Mediator, the Peace Maker between God and mankind.--Eph. 2:13-17.

R4880 : page 358

Without any question, then, we can see when the world will have its Judgment, or trial Day, to decide which of them will be worthy and which will be unworthy to receive perfect life as human beings. But now as to the trial of the fallen angels:--

THEIR JUDGMENT PROBABLY NOW

We have answered in previous issues of THE WATCH TOWER that this trial will be, we believe, at the very beginning of this Great Day. And why at the beginning? For the reason that there is only one way, so far as we can see, in which these fallen angels can have a trial, their trial consisting in having a fuller opportunity to sin, if they so desire, or an opportunity to show, if they wish, that they are sick of sin and desire to return to harmony with God. We cannot think that God will allow this trial of the angels during the Millennial reign, for then, nothing shall hurt; nothing shall destroy; Satan will be bound and all evil influences will be restrained. No, it cannot be then. And in order to be tried at all, these fallen angels must have certain liberties granted, to prove them. Otherwise, where would be their trial? Consequently, reasoning along this basis (2 Peter 3:7), we reach the conclusion that the trial of these fallen angels is in the near future--perhaps to some extent already begun. In what way? Somewhat after the manner of their previous trial before the flood. And what happened at that time? The account is given in Genesis, chapter 6.

We read that at that time "The sons of God (materialized angels--Jude 6,7) saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took unto themselves wives of all that they chose (apparently without consulting anyone),...and there were born unto them children, who became mighty men of renown"--giants, different from purely human stock.

This was a very peculiar condition of things. How could this be, you may ask? How could the angels do this? The Scriptures answer that at that time the angels had a liberty which they do not now have. That liberty was the privilege of materialization--the taking on of a human body. They acted as men, they ate as men, they spoke as men; and as men they begot children. But since these fathers were of a superior stock, in some respects their children were men of renown and giants as compared with the ordinary human stock.

THEY ARE CONFINED TO EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE

The Apostles Peter and Jude tell us that after their wrong course these angels were separated from association with the heavenly and holy angels, who were in harmony with God, and were cast down to tartarus, to our earth's atmosphere, "to be reserved in chains of darkness until the Judgment of the Great Day." What does that expression mean? The "chains of darkness" we believe to be a figurative statement signifying that they were no longer permitted to materialize in the light and, generally, not able to materialize at all. But of late spiritists claim, and we believe truthfully, that these spirits can now materialize in as real and tangible flesh as any human being possesses. As they state, and as the facts prove, this can be done only under certain circumstances; they still have a great deal of difficulty in materializing in the light. The "chains of darkness" still seem to be on them to some extent.

Spiritists further claim, however, that the spirits are breaking these bonds and that gradually they will be able to do fully in the light everything that they can now do in the dark, and even more than this. The Bible corroborates what the spiritists claim, only that the spiritists teach that these things are done by the dead; who, the spirits tell, are more alive after death than before. Spiritists assert that it is the spirits of dead human beings that materialize. But the Bible takes the opposite position and says that these spirits are the fallen angels, and that so far as humanity are concerned, the dead are totally dead and must remain so until the resurrection.

So, then, the Bible and the Spiritists are in decided conflict; and yet there is this harmony that we speak of, namely, that at the time of the Judgment of the Great Day we may expect the bonds restraining these spirits to be loosened. Of course God could hold them in restraint; but He will now permit these fallen angels to have a great lease of liberty. Then will come to them a

great trial and testing, or judgment, in respect to their willingness or unwillingness to do according to the Divine will.

SOME OF THEM PROBABLY REPENTANT

It would not surprise us if some of the fallen angels who sinned in the past have repented and have had long centuries of experience with the unrepentant ones; and that these have suffered persecutions from those of evil mind. And so there may thus be two classes among the fallen angels; the one class desirous of doing the will of

R4880 : page 359

God and the other class, like Satan himself, wilfully opposed to the will of God. The trial time will prove each of these angels and manifest to which class each belongs.

We think, too, that we see in the Scriptures a passage which we had not seen with the same force before --a Scripture that seems to give a thought along this very line. It seems to imply that at a very near date probably these fallen angels will have wonderful power, such as they have never had since the days of the flood, and that this wonderful power will be used in a very malevolent manner, to stir up mankind to evil doing; and that this will be the key, the secret connected with the awful time of trouble which the Bible tells us will mark the conclusion of this Age and which will constitute the forerunner or beginning of the New Dispensation.

THE HOLDING OF THE FOUR WINDS

The Scripture we have in mind is found in Revelation 7:1-3. This symbolical passage speaks of the four angels which stand at the four corners of the earth and hold the four winds that they should not blow upon the earth or upon the sea "until we shall have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." To our understanding we are in that very time when the servants of God are being sealed in their foreheads. The forehead represents the intellect; and to be "sealed in the forehead" is to be intellectually marked.

The intimation is that at this time, in the conclusion of this Gospel Age, God will grant some intellectual mark upon his servants that no others will have; that there will be a great work of sealing; and those in perfect harmony with God are to be His servants in the work of sealing. This seal is the Truth. "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free." (John 8:32.) The Truth will mark in their foreheads those who receive it, branding them in a way that others of mankind are not marked or branded.

All of the Lord's truly consecrated children can see what a wonderful power the knowledge of the Divine

Plan has been. How different everything in the world seems! How the eyes of their understanding have been opened to see many things that they could not understand before! Just as soon as the sealing of the saints is completed, just as soon as all the elect are thus marked, just as soon as this Age shall be completed, then those four angels who are holding the four winds, that they should not blow upon the earth, will let them loose; and the effect will be--what? If four winds, from the four corners of the earth, come together, they make a whirlwind; and that is exactly what the Bible declares the great time of trouble will be.

SOME FORCEFUL SYMBOLS

The thought we wish particularly to call attention to is that these "winds of heaven" are symbolical winds--not literal winds; and that the "earth" that is not to be hurt is the symbolical earth--not the literal earth; and that the "sea" that is not to be hurt is the symbolical sea--not the literal sea. We have previously shown, in our STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, that these symbols are found throughout the Old and New Testaments; the earth represents the social order, government, restraint, etc.; and the sea represents the restless mass of mankind, which more or less lash and dash against the earth, the governmental power. "The winds of heaven," in this case, we understand to be "the powers of the air."

The Bible says that Satan is the Prince of the Power of the Air, that he is the Prince of Demons. (Eph. 2:2; Matt. 9:34.) Therefore we understand that in this symbolical sense "the powers of the air" are the demons; that these powers of the air that are being held until the saints of God shall have been sealed in their foreheads, are these fallen angels. As soon as the power that is now controlling them shall be removed, we shall have a reign of evil all over the earth. The evil spirits will do all the evil that is in their power, and this will constitute the trial of all the fallen angels--the lifting of the restraints to see whether they will go contrary to the Divine will. All who thus manifest their alliance with evil in any way will become subjects of the Second Death; while others who show their loyalty to God will mark themselves as worthy, presumably, of everlasting life.

It may be something in connection with the saints that will constitute the test of these angels. However, we need not wait many years until we shall know.

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R4882 : page 359

THE WORD AND THE WAY

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, 'This is

the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."--Isaiah 30:21.

IN OUR DAY when the evil spirits seem to be trying very hard to get into close communication with humanity, we learn of what is called the "clairaudient power." Suggestions are made to the person having this power that he has a great favor from God in being able to hear what others cannot hear. Usually he becomes puffed up, thinking that he is in special favor with God and the angels. Then the fallen angels are very liable to take advantage of his wrong thought and to seek to obsess him. We have tried to guard people from this very condition of things; and from time to time we hear of those who are helped. Only a few days ago we had a letter from a lady who had thought that a godly influence was being exercised upon her, whereas later she found that it was a malevolent influence to bring her into slavery of mind. But the voice referred to in our text we understand to be the voice of God. The Scriptures, written in the past for our admonition, constitute this voice. This voice is behind us in the sense that the history of the centuries is behind us. So we are to hearken to the voice that comes through the Apostles and Prophets; and as we hearken, we recognize that it is the voice of the Lord, pointing the way in which we should go.

But as we hearken to the past we hear also the voices of false prophets; as, for instance, the voice of Satan, the great Adversary of the past. The voice of God said, "Ye shall surely die." The Adversary's voice said, "Ye shall not surely die." At one time all of us were dead. Some of us, however, were blessed as we obtained the true information and followed in the way God directed. Many of the so-called "Fathers" of the past, we find, do not give the same voice that Jesus and the Apostles and Prophets gave. We are to guard against all such voices and to listen for the Shepherd's voice; to look for the righteous arrangements made for us. We are not to investigate anything which would not seem to be the voice of God, but which tends to deceive, to alienate the sheep from the Shepherd.

R4882 : page 360

The child of the Lord has learned where to seek counsel; and the counsel of wisdom is always ready to come to his aid. The Prophet describes it as a word, a voice "behind thee." It is not a voice before thee, of some new theology--of Evolution or Spiritism or Christian Science or other human philosophy--but it is the old theology, with its blessed doctrine of hope through Christ our Redeemer and Lord, our Teacher, our Example and our Leader. It is the voice of the Lord through His inspired Apostles and Prophets, from two thousand to

four thousand years ago. It is to this Word of Divine inspiration, then, that the Prophet would direct the attention of all those desiring wise counsel; and in that Word we hear the voice of God, saying, "This is the Way, walk ye in it."

BIBLE TO BE OPENED UP TO THE WORLD SHORTLY

While these words of the Prophet were addressed directly to fleshly Israel, their application to spiritual Israel is none the less forcible. As applied to fleshly Israel, the Prophet foretells the return of Divine favor to them when the long season of their chastisement and of their blindness shall be at an end. Then, under the Mediatorial Reign of Christ, the blind eyes shall be opened, the deaf ears shall be unstopped and the voice of the whole inspired Word, then made clear to their understanding, will direct them in the right ways of the Lord; for the books (the Law and the Prophets and the New Testament Scriptures) shall be opened, and they shall be judged according to their teaching.--Rev. 20:12.

The way then indicated to fleshly Israel and to all the world will be a grand highway of holiness; "and the ransomed of the Lord" shall go up thereon "with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." (Isa. 35:10.) And the end of that way will be life and peace, salvation to the uttermost from sin and death, and complete restoration to human perfection.

While the way of life will be made very clear to Israel and to the world, in the Age to come, it is made none the less clear now to the children of God who walk by faith and not by sight. It is shown to be, first, a way of faith; and those who now walk by faith are the true Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16,29), to whom pertain the Covenant and the exceeding great and precious promises, in their largest fulfilment. Second, It is a way of entire consecration to God, even unto death, which implies the burial of one's own will into the will of God--the presenting of self a living sacrifice.

LET US WALK AFTER THE SPIRIT

In harmony with these two principles--faith and consecration--we are taught to walk in newness of life, not after the flesh, but after the spirit; not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds, but circumspectly; "not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time"; not by sight, but by faith.--Rom. 6:4; 8:1; Eph. 4:17,18; 5:15,16; 2 Cor. 5:7.

By faith and consecration we have come into a new life as spiritual sons of God; and yet we have this treasure in earthen vessels and the new life is only in its embryo condition. Hence the necessity of walking after the spiritual instincts of the New Creature and keeping down the stronger impulses of the old creature. This is what it is to walk in newness of life, after the Spirit and not

after the flesh. To "walk after the flesh" is to pursue its hopes, aims and ambitions; and since the flesh and the spirit are at war one with the other, it is impossible to maintain the life of both. Therefore, it is written, "If ye [spirit-begotten ones] live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify [put to death] the deeds of the body, ye shall live."--Rom. 8:13.

While the Word of the Lord speaks thus on general principles as to the way in which we should walk, we are also bidden to come with all the minor affairs of life to inquire of these Divine Oracles. If we know not whether to turn to the right hand or to the left, we come and find the promise, "Commit thy way unto the Lord"; "He will direct thy steps." Or, if heavy laden, we find the promise, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Thus the voice behind brings comfort, peace and rest in the midst of all life's cares and trials, if we walk in obedience to all its principles and precepts. "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God!" --Psa. 37:5; Prov. 3:6; Matt. 11:28; Gal. 6:16.

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R4881 : page 360

LOYALTY THE GREAT TEST

AT THE CLOSE of the Millennium, when men shall have been made perfect, the world of mankind will be subjected to a final test, not as to their perfection of human nature, but as to their loyalty to God. The test upon Mother Eve was of this character. She was not deceived in the sense of not knowing the meaning of loyalty to God or what constituted disobedience. God had forewarned her. She knew what was right. But she was deceived so far as the consequences were concerned. So with Satan. He was deceived as to the outcome of his course, in thinking he would be able to carry out his plans despite the Lord.

So, we believe, it will be at the end of the Millennial Age. Some of mankind will be deceived as to the result of the course they will take. All who are entirely loyal to the Divine Law will perceive the error of the wicked. During the Millennial Age Christ, as the Mediator, will stand between mankind and the full requirements of Justice; and mankind will be, as it were, in a household of

R4882 : page 360

protection. When all evil influences are restrained mankind will have a very favorable opportunity for coming to a full knowledge of the Divine requirements. After they shall have enjoyed the blessings of Restitution to

the full, then it will be appropriate that a test shall come to see whether their adherence to righteousness is merely a matter of policy or whether they have reached such a condition of heart-loyalty to God and righteousness as not to be moved from righteousness by any influence.

At the end of the Millennial Age, then, after they shall have been turned over to the Father, He will thus test mankind to see whether or not they have learned full obedience. Evil influences will be let loose for a season. If they have not learned thoroughly the lesson of obedience they will be unworthy of everlasting life and will demonstrate that theirs has been merely a policy-service. It will be because they have not come into fulness of heart-harmony with God that they will be peculiarly susceptible, in this trial respecting their loyalty.

ALL MUST BE TESTED AS TO LOYALTY TO GOD

Satan was tested as to his loyalty to God. Adam and Eve were tested as to their loyalty to God. In the time of Noah the angels were similarly tested--not as to whether they preferred right to wrong, but as to their entire loyalty. Jesus Himself was tested as to His loyalty to the Father. So mankind, at the end of the

R4882 : page 361

Millennial Age, will be tested as respects their heart-harmony with God.

As to the nature of their test we are not specifically informed. Possibly the temptation that will come to mankind at that time will be the desire to take possession of the government of earth before it is fully turned over to them. If this be true, since they will know that it is God's intention to turn the earth over to mankind when the end of the thousand years shall come, they will be anticipating the immediate transfer of everything from the Ancient Worthies, who shall have been ruling as "princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45:16.) When the time shall be fully come, they will be disappointed. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city."--Rev. 20:9.

This shows the condition of many of the world at that time. Many of them will become restless. They will say, "These Ancient Worthies are holding back the Government from us. We do not need to have anything to stand between us and the government of the world." This attitude will be disloyalty to God. Knowing that all things are of Divine arrangement, they should say, "The thousand years, seemingly, are over. We thought this Government would be turned over to us. But we will leave matters entirely in God's hands. If He sees best to give us the Government, well and good. But if He sees best to hold it back after the time is up, we shall be satisfied." Such would be the attitude of loyalty.

So today. Our attitude should be to recognize that there is but one God and one Lord Jesus Christ; and that we will obey them. In due time we shall see God's Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power fully demonstrated; that they are fully harmonious in all of the affairs that God has permitted. Those who can see this by faith, are now demonstrating their loyalty of heart to God.

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R4881 : page 361

SET AS A WATCHMAN

--EZEKIEL 3.--OCTOBER 1.--

"Hear the Word at My mouth and give them warning from Me."--Ezek. 3:17.

EZEKIEL RANKS amongst the great Prophets. Most realistic were his visions and powerfully described. A portion of his prophecy was written before the final serious troubles upon the kingdom of Judah, which resulted in the overthrow of Zedekiah's kingdom. The remainder of the book was written after the complete overthrow of the kingdom. The entire prophecy was given in Babylon, Ezekiel himself residing there and ministering as a Prophet chiefly to the captives, arousing their hearts to an appreciation of their situation and to a hope of return in God's appointed time to their own land.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that Ezekiel's mission was entirely or even chiefly to the Jews of his time. Rather we are to understand, through St. Peter's statement, that he, with other Prophets of old, spoke and wrote things which they themselves and the people who heard them did not understand--things which God did not wish to have understood until after the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost--things which would be "meat in due season" for the spiritual Israelites throughout this age.

For instance, when Ezekiel tells the people, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," he was delivering a truth applicable to the Gospel Church during this Age, and a truth which will be applicable to the whole world during the Messianic reign, but which was not truth nor applicable to the Jews at the time of the utterance. Why? Because the whole world at that time was lying in the Wicked One; as St. Paul explains, they were all under sentence of death through Adam's disobedience. They could not be put on trial for life, individually, until first they should be redeemed from the Adamic condemnation.

The blood of bulls and goats could never take away sin from the Jews, nor redeem them; the redemption

could come only in the Divinely appointed way--through the death of the Savior; and the Savior had not yet come, had not yet brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. And as for Israel's Law Covenant, it was merely typical of the New Covenant of the future, and we have the Apostle's word for it that the Law could not make anything perfect.

No amount of turning from sin could give anybody eternal life. None could so turn from sin as to be perfect, hence the necessity for the Savior. When Ezekiel refers to the proverb that "the fathers have eaten a sour grape and the children's teeth are set on edge," he was stating the general fact that all human sin and weakness descend by heredity from parent to child, and that the matter of recovery is therefore a hopeless one except as a Redeemer, separate and distinct from the sinner race, would be provided. And this provision for release from the weakness inherited from Father Adam has been provided by Jehovah through His Only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the world's Redeemer.

"TIMES OF RESTITUTION"

In the 16th chapter of Ezekiel's prophecy the declaration is clearly set forth that in the Divine Plan a great restitution is sure to come which will affect not only Israel and the living nations of the time, but also the dead of all nations. From the 40th verse onward the Prophet describes the certainty of God's promise to recover Israel, to bring them back into His favor, and that on a better basis than ever in the past. At the same time the Lord declares, through the Prophet, that the Samaritans will be restored and blessed, and that the Sodomites will be restored and blessed. The latter nation had been entirely destroyed by fire from heaven, as the Redeemer declared. It follows that their restoration must be from the tomb, from death, hades, sheol.

The prophecy goes on to declare that the Lord will not do this because of any worthiness of the Israelites or others, but for His own Name's sake--of His own good pleasure. In other words, this is the purpose which God purposed in Himself from before the foundation of the world. This is the purpose which He declared to Enoch, saying that in due time Messiah would "come with myriads of holy ones" to establish justice and righteousness in the earth, to bless the people. This is the same message which God declared to Abraham saying, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This was the hope which Israel had so long entertained and which the Lord declares will not go unfulfilled.

This description is found in verses 40 to 60, the conclusion being that when Israel thus experiences the goodness of God in their restitution they will be ashamed and never open their mouths again by way of boasting or complaint. This will be after God's favor shall have been

restored to them, and He shall be pacified toward them in respect to all of their idolatrous doings of the past. The pacification of Divine Justice is found in the redemption accomplished by our Lord and Savior.

Ezekiel is one of the Prophets referred to by St. Peter as prophesying respecting coming "Times of Restitution" --blessings of Messiah's Kingdom to be inaugurated at the close of this Age, as soon as the Church shall have been elected to be the Royal Priesthood and shall be glorified with the great Prophet, Priest, King, Mediator, their Head and Lord. St. Peter declares that these coming "times of restitution" are mentioned by all the Holy Prophets since the world began, and Ezekiel's reference to them marks him as one of the Holy Prophets. --Acts 3:19-23.

Viewing our study from this standpoint we perceive that Ezekiel stood for, or represented the Son of Man, the great Teacher, the Redeemer; he also represented the members of the Bride of Christ whom the glorious Head may, from time to time, use as His mouthpieces.

Ezekiel was carried miraculously forward to some of the captives residing by the river Chebar. After a time he received a message for them, declaring that God had appointed him a watchman to give warning from Him. This warning has been going forth ever since the Gospel was preached. It tells the wicked, that is, the wilfully wicked, the intentionally wicked, that the end of their way is death, but that by turning from wickedness they may live. This message of this Gospel Age is not to the whole world, but, as the Scriptures declare, "To him that hath an ear to hear." St. Paul uses this message saying, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ Our Lord."--Rom. 6:23.

NOT TORMENT BUT DEATH

It is worthy of note here that neither the Prophet nor those whom he typified were ever commissioned to say to mankind that the sinner would be eternally roasted, nor suffer eternally in any condition. The extreme penalty for sin presented to us in God's Word is, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." In other words, God declares that He will not give eternal life to the wicked, but only to those who will turn from sin to righteousness. Thus we read, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" And again, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son shall not see life (everlasting), but the wrath of God abideth on him"--the wrath or sentence of death everlasting.

In any event, the Prophet and those whom he represents, including all of God's consecrated people of today, are duty-bound to make clear this feature of the Divine Program, namely, that all wilful sin will bring death;

that all wilful sinners, as St. Paul declares, shall be punished with everlasting destruction--not with everlasting torment. (2 Thes. 1:9.) Every member of the Body of Christ is a watchman on the walls of Zion, even though today Zion be in Babylon, as were those typically addressed by the Prophet.

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R4882 : page 362

"RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE"

--EZEK. 47:1-12--OCTOBER 8--

"Whosoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely."--Rev. 22:17.

IN THIS STUDY also we find that the Lord through Ezekiel gives us a picture of the Messianic Age, very similar to the one given us in the book of Revelation, seven hundred years after.

Ezekiel's picture shows Jerusalem and the Temple of God as the starting point for the River of the Water of Life; so in the Revelation account. Ezekiel shows the river deepening and broadening from a rivulet to a mighty river. He pictures it as flowing down to the Dead Sea, and carrying life whithersoever it goes.

He pictures the Dead Sea as being revived, recovered from its deadness, and full of fish. No such river has ever yet sprung forth from Jerusalem, nor can we imagine how the river would ever have its start in the mountain top and reach such proportions in the short distance.

This description, picturing a great spiritual truth, is in full accord with the picture in Revelation. It represents beautifully, forcefully, the blessings of refreshment and restitution which will issue forth from the New Jerusalem, the Kingdom of Messiah, when it shall be established amongst men. Gradually the mighty influences of the reign of Messiah will extend blessings to all mankind, even to the submerged class, steeped in ignorance and superstition and degradation, fitly represented by the Dead Sea.

Revelation pictures this river as flowing from under the Throne, the New Jerusalem, clear as crystal, and having trees of life on either side of its banks, good for food. Ezekiel has the same picture in mind; he tells of the same trees, whose leaves shall not fade and whose fruit shall not fall, but which will bring forth good fruit every month, because the water which refreshes them comes from the Sanctuary. "The fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaves thereof for healing." Similarly, in Revelation, we are told, "The leaves will be for the healing of the people; and the fruit for the sustenance

of everlasting life; and the Water itself will be for their refreshment." Then, we are told, "the Spirit and the Bride" shall give the invitation--a world-wide invitation; "Whosoever will" then may come, and he who hears the invitation may say to others, "Come, and drink of the Water of Life, freely"!

NO "RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE" NOW

We are certain in our application of these symbolic pictures, that they belong to the future and not to the present time. Where is the Water of Life of Revelation

R4883 : page 362

now? Where have we anything corresponding to the life-sustaining trees and their healing leaves? On the contrary, we have the Lord's Word for it that "No man can come unto Me except the Father which sent Me draw him." (John 6:44.) In other words, there is a measure of selection or election as respects the class invited to constitute "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife." "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called."

But with the end of this Age will come the end of the elective process; then the Divine Message will be Free Grace, an offering and opportunity to every creature of Adam's race. All blind eyes will be opened that all may see; all deaf ears will be unstopped that all may hear; and the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth; none will need to say to his neighbor, "Know the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least unto the greatest of them."--Jer. 31:34.

NO BRIDE TO SAY "COME"

The Revelation picture tells us that the Bride of Christ, as well as the Holy Spirit, will give the invitation to every creature to come and partake of the Water of Life, freely. But how could the Bride give this invitation

R4883 : page 363

before she exists? That there is no Bride at the present time is manifest. Now is the time for calling the Bride class. Now is the time for those invited to make their "calling and their election sure;" but there will be no Bride until the Incoming Age. The name "Bride" implies a marriage; the Church is already espoused to Christ, but the marriage is promised to take place at His second coming. Then there will be a Bride, and shortly after, the Bride, in association with her Lord, will be in Kingdom power, in the New Jerusalem--the heavenly. From that City, that new Seat of earth's Empire, will go forth God's Message, gradually deepening and broadening until every member of the race shall have had an opportunity to share in its blessing of life everlasting.

In thinking of these glorious favors coming to mankind, let us remember that they will all be earthly--a restitution to that which was lost. Earthly splendor and human perfection are God's provision for the willing and obedient of mankind in general. The invitation to become members of the Bride of Christ is a limited one, having a limited time; and if our understanding of the Scriptures is correct, the end of this special opportunity is nigh--the time for the change to the condition of glory is at the door--the time for the blessing of all the families of the earth is at hand.

In view of these coming blessings foretold by the Prophet and by the Lord Himself, can we not join with the poet in singing:--

"Rejoice! rejoice! the promised time is coming!

Rejoice! rejoice! the wilderness shall bloom!

And Zion's children soon shall sing,

'The deserts all are blossoming!'

Rejoice! rejoice! the promised time is coming!

Rejoice! rejoice! the wilderness shall bloom!

The Gospel banner, wide unfurled,

Shall wave in triumph o'er the world,

And every creature, bond or free,

Shall hail the glorious Jubilee!"

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R4883 : page 363

ENDLESS TORMENTS UNSCRIPTURAL

--BY REV. CHARLES KINGSLEY--MAY 9, 1857.--

ABOUT endless torment.--(Keep that expression distinct from eternal, which has been mixed up with it, the former being what the popular creed really holds.) You may say:

"(1) Historically, that,

"(a) The doctrine is found nowhere in the Old Testament, nor any hint of it. The expression, in the end of Isaiah, about the fire unquenched and the worm not dying, is plainly of the corpses of men upon the physical earth, in the valley of Hinnom, or Gehenna, where the offal of Jerusalem was burned perpetually. Enlarge on this, as it is the passage which our Lord quotes, and by it the meaning of His words must be primarily determined.

"(b) The doctrine of endless torment was, as a historical fact, brought back from Babylon by the Rabbis. It was a very ancient, primary doctrine of the Magi, an appendage of their fire-kingdom of Ahriman, and may be found in the old Zends, long prior to Christianity.

"(c) St. Paul accepts nothing of it as far as we can tell, never making the least allusion to the doctrine.

"(d) The Apocalypse simply repeats the imagery of Isaiah

and of our Lord; but asserts, distinctly, the non-endlessness of torture, declaring that in the consummation, not only death, but hell shall be cast into the Lake of Fire.

"(e) The Christian Church has never really held it exclusively till now. It remained quite an open question till the age of Justinian, 530, and significantly enough, as soon as (200 years before that) endless torment for the heathen became a popular theory, purgatory sprang up synchronously by the side of it, as a relief for the conscience and reason of the Church.

"(f) Since the Reformation it has been an open question in the English Church, and the philosophical Platonists, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, always considered it as such.

"(g) The Church of England, by the deliberate expunging of the 42nd Article, which affirmed endless punishment, has declared it, authoritatively, to be open.

"(h) It is so, in fact. Neither Mr. Maurice, I, nor any others who have denied it, can be dispossessed or proceeded against legally, in any way whatsoever.

"Exegetically, you may say, I think, that the meanings of the word *aion* and *aionios* have little or nothing to do with it, even if *aion* be derived from *aei*, always, which I greatly doubt. The word is never used in Scripture anywhere else in the sense of endlessness (vulgarly called eternity). It always meant, both in Scripture and out, a period of time. Else how could it have a plural--how could you talk of the aeons and of aeons of aeons, as the Scriptures do? Nay, more, how talk of *houtos ho aion* (which the translators, with laudable inconsistency, have translated 'this world'), i.e., this present state of things, 'Age,' 'Dispensation,' or Epoch. *Aionios*, therefore, means, and must mean, belonging to an Epoch, or the Epoch; and *aionios kolasis* is the punishment allotted to that Epoch. Always bear in mind--what Maurice insists on, and what is so plain to honest readers--that our Lord and the Apostles always speak of its being in the end of the Age or Aion, not as ushering in a new one; that the Lord would come to judge and punish the old world, and to create a new one out of its ruins; or rather, as is better expressed, to burn up the chaff and keep the wheat; i.e., all the elements of food, as seed for the new world.

"I think you may say that our Lord took the popular doctrine because He found it, and tried to correct and purify it, and put it on a really moral ground. You may quote the parable of Dives and Lazarus.

"He there represents Dives as still Abraham's child, under no despair, nor cut off from Abraham's sympathy, but under a direct, moral training, of which you see the fruit. He is gradually weaned from the selfish desire of indulgence for himself, to love and care for his brethren, a divine step forward in his life, which of itself proves him not to be lost. The impossibility of Lazarus' getting to him, or vice versa, expresses plainly the great truth, that each being where he ought to be at that time, interchange of place (i.e., of spiritual

state) is impossible. But it says nothing against Dives rising out of his torment, when he has learned the lesson of it, and of his going where he ought to go. The common interpretation is merely arguing in a circle, assuming that there are but two states of the dead, 'Heaven' and 'Hell,' and then trying at once to interpret the parable by the assumption, and to prove the assumption from the parable. Next, you may say that the English word damnation, like the Greek katakrisis, is perhaps krisis simple, it simply means condemnation, and is (thank God) retained in that sense in various of our formularies, where I always read the words, e.g., 'eateth to himself damnation,' with sincere pleasure, as protests in favor of the true and rational meaning of the word, against the modern and narrower meaning.

"You may say that Fire and Worms, whether physical or spiritual, must, in all logical fairness, be supposed to do what fire and worms do do, viz., destroy decayed and dead matter and set free its elements to enter into new organisms; that, as they are beneficent and purifying agents in this life, they must be supposed such in the future life; and that the conception of fire as an engine of torture is an unnatural use of that agent, and not to be attributed to God without blasphemy, unless you suppose that the suffering (like all which He inflicts) is intended to teach man something which he cannot learn elsewhere.

"You may say that the catch, 'All sin deserves infinite punishment,

R4884 : page 364

because it is against an Infinite Being,' is a worthless amphiboly, using the word infinite in two utterly different senses, and being a mere play on sound; that it is directly contradicted by Scripture, especially by our Lord's own words, which declare that every man (not merely the wicked) shall receive the due reward of his deeds--that he who, etc., shall be beaten with few stripes, and so forth; that the words 'He shall not go out till he has paid the uttermost farthing,' evidently imply (unless spoken in cruel mockery) that he may go out then; and that it is scandalous for Protestants to derive from thence the opposite doctrine, while they call the Papists rogues for trying to prove the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary from exactly the same use of heos.

"Finally, you may call on them to rejoice that there is a fire of God, the Father, whose name is Love, burning forever, unquenchably, to destroy out of every man's heart and out of the hearts of all nations, and off the physical and moral world, all which offends and makes a lie; that into that fire the Lord will surely cast all shams, lies, hypocrisies, tyrannies, pedantries, false doctrines, yea, and the men who love them too well to give them up, that the smoke of their basanismos (i.e., the torture which makes men confess the truth, for that is the real meaning of it; basanismos means the touch-stone by which gold was tested) may ascend perpetually, for a warning and a beacon to all nations, as the smoke of the torment of French aristocracies, the Bourbon dynasties, is ascending up to Heaven and has been ever since 1793. Oh,

Cooper--Is it not good news that that fire is unquenchable; that that worm will not die? They tried, we tried, in our ignorance, to quench that fire, when we put Louis XVIII. on the throne. But the fire burned up him and our chaffy works. The parti pretre tried to kill the worm which was gnawing at their hearts, making them dimly aware that they were wrong, and liars, and that God and His Universe were against them, and that they and their system were rotting and must die. And they put poor Poerios and Madaia in prison, and showed all the signs of weak terror, suspicion, spite; but they cannot kill God's worm, Thomas Cooper.

"You cannot look in the face of many a working, Continental priest without seeing that the worm is at his heart. You cannot watch their conduct without seeing that it is at the heart of their system. God grant that we here in England--we parsons (dissenting and church)--may take warning by them. The fire may be kindled for us. The worm may seize our hearts. To judge by the temper of the 'Record' and the 'Morning Advertiser,' it has its fangs in some of our hearts already. God grant that in that day we may have courage to let the fire and the worm do their work--to say to Christ, These, too, are Thine, and out of Thine infinite love they have come. Thou requirest truth in the inward parts and I will thank Thee for any means, however bitter, which Thou usest to make me true. I want to be an honest man, and a right man! And, of joy, Thou wantest me to be so also. Oh joy, that though I long, cowardly, to quench Thy fire, I cannot do it. Purge me, therefore, O Lord, though it be with fire. Burn up the chaff of vanity and self-indulgence, of hasty prejudice, second-hand dogmas--husks which do not feed my soul, with which I cannot be content, of which I feel ashamed daily--and if there be any grains of wheat in me, any word or thought or power of action which may be of use as seed for my nation after me, gather it, O Lord, into Thy garner.

"Yes, Thomas Cooper, because I believe in a God of Absolute and Unbounded Love, therefore I believe in a Loving Anger of His, which will and must devour and destroy all which is decayed, monstrous, abortive, in His Universe, till all enemies shall be put under His feet, to be pardoned surely, if they confess themselves in the wrong and open their eyes to the truth. And God shall be All in All.

"Those last are wide words. It is he who limits them (not I who accept them in their fulness), who denies the verbal inspiration of Scripture."

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R4883 : page 364

"PRAY ALWAYS"

"Pray without ceasing."--1 Thess. 5:17.

A LITTLE QUOTATION from somebody's brain seems wonderfully fitting in the consideration

of our text--"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." It is a complete definition, for sometimes we pray with groanings that cannot be uttered.

There is one form of prayer, one feature of prayer, which is very appropriate to us, namely, thanksgiving. Yet the Scriptures discriminate between prayer, praise and thanksgiving, and use these words in the same connection, as representing various features of worship, communion with God. In the sense of petition our definition also applies when we include thanksgiving in our prayers. Expressed or unexpressed, prayer is the soul's sincere desire. Prayer that would not be the soul's sincere desire would not be acceptable. We may not always know how to render our thanks to God, but it is comforting to remember that the Lord knows our thoughts and is willing to accept our feeble expressions.

All those who have come to the Lord must first have recognized their need of coming and His readiness, willingness and ability to supply all necessary things. We need rest and peace and life everlasting. These we do not find in the world around us. There is no real peace outside of the Lord's provision: "My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27.) The things which the Lord has promised to His people are things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man.

Whoever, therefore, has received the earnest of the Spirit has something to desire, something to look forward to, something to pray for. Therefore we pray, Thy Kingdom come, that the blessings which the Lord has promised shall be fulfilled, not only those for the world, but also those for the Church.

SHOULD PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS EVEN AS WE FORGIVE

As the Christian goes through the world he finds various things to distract his heart. But since he finds that the Lord has promised that peace he should look for that peace, should expect it. We should pray to God for the things that we think we ought to have. But we are to take His superior wisdom as expressed in His Word as our guide; and we are to ask according to His Word. If we have a measure of peace and of blessing, we should pray all the more for the fulness of joy. While we have been cleansed from original sin by the precious blood of Christ, we must remember that we have daily trespasses; and we should pray daily, "Forgive us our trespasses." This request the Lord answers on condition that we ask for forgiveness of our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. So the Christian will find a great deal to pray for in all of life's affairs.

The Christian, however, should not be so absorbed in

meditation that he cannot do his work. But the spirit of prayer should be with him, so that in every affair of life, in every perplexity, he would be ever ready to turn his mind toward the Lord for His blessings and to look to the Lord regarding all daily interests; for we are the Lord's. This course would be a life of prayer without ceasing. We do not cease to ask for the coming of the

R4883 : page 365

Kingdom simply because we have asked for it once. We do not cease to pray for our daily food. We acknowledge that all good things come from Him. We recognize that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17); and that He who gave His Son for us is ever ready to give to those who seek to serve Him.

This attitude of heart is praying without ceasing. Sometimes the thought may only flash through the mind, but, nevertheless, it brings a blessing to us. All of God's dealings with the Elect class are for their development; and one feature of this development is to learn to know whence our blessings come and to appreciate the fact that God is the Giver, and that "no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly."

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R4885 : page 365

INDEPENDENT BIBLE STUDY

A BROTHER WRITES for our opinion respecting the wisdom and propriety of the different classes having "independent Bible study."

We cannot be sure just what force or significance the Brother gives to the word independent. Just so sure as each individual has a full right to study the Bible without hindrance from anybody, so has every class this right or liberty. But in using our liberties it behooves us to exercise as much "wisdom from above" as possible. For four centuries Protestantism has been contending the right of private judgment for interpretation of God's Word and has exercised this right, and we would be the last to dispute it.

At the same time two things are worthy of remembrance:--

(1) There has been very little independent Bible study all this time.

(2) No very clear understanding of the Bible was reached during all these centuries. We account for this by supposing that the Lord's due time for opening His Word to our understanding has only now come. If now the Lord has blessed us with

clearer views of His Word, it behooves us to remember that we did not get it because of the four hundred years of independent Bible study, but by His specially calling it to our attention in His own peculiar way in recent years. Wisdom no less than humility should teach us to be neither too boastful nor too reckless in our use of the word independent in connection with this question. While we have the same right to independence that our forefathers had it might do us no more good than it did them. Rather we should seek for dependent Bible study, rather than for independent Bible study. Our dependance should not be upon man, but upon the Lord; yet we should expect the Lord to use human instrumentality in the present, as in the past.

The matter is for each individual Christian and each class of students to decide. The Lord has laid down no law on the subject. His children are to use the "wisdom which comes from above" in respect to these and all matters.

The questioner may mean to distinguish between the use of Berean Studies or topics from the topical index of our new Bibles and the taking up of a chapter or an Epistle without any guide or help, except such as would be given by the leader of the class and its members. If so, much would depend on the personnel of the class and their development in the knowledge of the Truth. It is for the class to decide for itself every particular respecting its meetings. And should a class so decide they would have a perfect right to try different methods and to judge which proved the most helpful.

In any event those possessed of the new Bible study helps could follow nearly any lesson in the New Testament by noting the references and studying them and, if desirable, bringing them into the class. Any class leader who would make objection to a reference being made to THE WATCH TOWER or to STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES in connection with the discussion of any topic should properly be viewed with suspicion as a teacher. Why should he be afraid of any comment, from any quarter? And, especially, why should he fear or avoid or desire others to avoid any reference to the writings which God has used in giving him and the others instruction in the Scriptures?

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R4884 : page 365

FAITH, NOT SIGHT

"We walk by faith, not by sight."--2 Cor. 5:7.

THIS PRINCIPLE holds true in respect to all of God's dealings with His people during the night of weeping preceding the glorious morning of joy, when they shall

see as they are seen and know as they are known. Hence, to approach God's Word and have a right understanding of it, implies:--

(1) A heart condition of teachableness.

(2) A heart condition of faith in God, as the great Teacher who knows our limitations and who has promised to guide the willing and obedient into all Truth as it becomes "meat in due season."

R4885 : page 365

(3) An expectation of Divine guidance in the understanding of the Scriptures, even as God has promised, and, expecting this, they may seek for it in prayer.

(4) An exercise of their reasoning faculties that, while expecting and seeking, and looking in the direction of their expectations, they may thereby approve or disapprove what is presented to them.

(5) Great care as to how they neglect these favors of God. They should beware of headiness and highmindedness, lest, having enjoyed the light and the blessing, these should slip from them and leave them again in the outer darkness in which we see the whole world of mankind groping.

To continue in the light and truth and blessing necessitates character-development, for the privilege of the light of knowledge is God's reward for purity of heart, of intention, of endeavor. So may we come into Christ and abide in Him and bring forth much fruit.

HEROES OF ALL TIME BUILT THEREOF

"It takes great love to stir a human heart
To live beyond the others, and apart;
A love that is not shallow--is not small;
Is not for one or two, but for them all.
Love that can wound love, for its highest need;
Love that can leave love, though the heart may bleed;
Love that can lose love, family and friend,
Yet steadfastly live, loving to the end.
A love that asks no answer, that can live,
Moved by one burning, deathless force--to give!
Love, strength and courage; courage, strength and love--
The heroes of all time are built thereof."

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R4885 : page 366

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

It is with joy and thanksgiving that we report the first public meeting at this place.

There were forty-one present. Brother Sturgeon's discourse on "Where Are the Dead?" was heard with excellent attention. One lady has since attended several meetings.

During the army maneuvers last week the leader of our class gave shelter to many of the soldiers who were drenched with rain, and almost exhausted from a forced march. The family remained up all night, serving hot coffee and a lunch, the soldiers having been without food about twenty hours. The men slept on the floors while their clothing was dried by the fire. Their offer to pay was declined, as the family considered it a privilege as Christians to do these things.

When they marched away to the town the brother went with them. The sight of a church drew forth from an officer a slighting remark. The brother said he was an ambassador for Christ and could also serve them in that way. The officer called the men to "attention," and on the street the brother gave them a talk on "Restitution," which was very well received by the men. AMY M. CLOTTREY.--Mass.

TESTIMONY MEETINGS--VOLUNTEER WORK

DEAREST BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Inclosed find report for the first half of June. Praise the Lord! The work goes forward with great force. To say marvelous results are being accomplished now would be to put it mildly. Oh, how thankful we are and should be, and how diligent we all should be during these closing moments that no stone be left unturned by us to forward our own part of this glorious work! Surely everyone of the Lord's dear ones has a part, if it is only to patiently endure the weakness

R4886 : page 366

of their bodies, and comfort and pray for those a little more able in body, but no more so in spirit. God bless these exhausted ones. It is good to have them, and to see how they can be truly happy, though unable to work as formerly.

Your suggestion re "Manna Texts" being used as subjects for prayer, praise and testimony meetings is a timely one and a good one. It appears to me it will meet a favorable reception everywhere. My hope is it may become universal.

Another important matter which appears to deserve notice is that in some places the brethren appear not to appreciate the privilege of service--in "volunteering" in the distribution of the papers--not half as they should. Sometimes they hire boys to do it for them. The thought is that it would never do for them to risk their respectability by appearing on the street thus. It would endanger their popularity and thus injure their practise or trade, etc. It is, of course, all right to hand out medicine or goods to the public, "but not the Truth," for the world approves the one and frowns upon the other. The boy may burn up the papers, and no one attend the meeting, and the Lord's cause languish and die, but what matters that so long as they retain their popularity and

practise!

Their sluggish consciences are in this way given another opiate and put to sleep. Evidently the thought is that the Lord is very thankful to have them on account of their attractiveness and agility in dodging the issue. Besides, in some places the papers sent on request and at considerable cost are not distributed at all. Oh, that we might see what a privilege it is to do the work, to "suffer with Him!" "Be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be a partaker of the affliction of the Gospel."-- 2 Tim. 1:8.

Thank God much is being done, but the work is not yet at its best. Let everyone put his shoulder to the wheel, throw his popularity and pleasing personality into the wagon and, with a mighty shout, the work will go right on to completion and to Glory.

Much love to yourself and to all the dear ones at Bethel and everywhere.

I am faithfully your servant in the Master's service,
O. L. SULLIVAN.

RE MANNA TEXTS FOR TOPICS

We learn that our suggestion has been quite misunderstood. It was that the Thursday MANNA texts be used as the topic for the Wednesday night Testimony Meetings in all the Classes.

It appears that some of the dear brethren do not grasp the meaning of the word testimony. Some get the thought that a little talk or sermon on the suggested text is a testimony. Not at all, dear friends. Our thought re a Testimony Meeting is that during the week personal experiences, associated with the text of the week, be watched for, and the next Wednesday be told to the Class. Perhaps our thought would be better grasped if these were called "Experience Meetings."

Such experiences are fresh and interesting--they seem never to grow stale. Besides, they are educational. We get more and better experiences out of life when we learn how to look for and note them. Try this plan!

BROTHER RUSSELL.

page 366

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

May I take a few moments of your valuable time to tell you how gracious our dear Lord has been to me, and how I thank him for the work you are doing?

Last October one of your sermons, printed in the Southbridge Herald and entitled, "Where Are the Dead?" caught my eye. I read it with amazement. Never had I supposed the dead were asleep. I took my Bible concordance and looked up every reference under the word "dead." I found you were right.

I took my Bible and your published sermon over to

a friend, and asked her if she had ever thought of the subject. She said she had always believed the dead were asleep, and so did her mother. Her mother was a Seventh Day Adventist. She asked me if I would not like to read some books her mother had. I said, "Yes, I am interested in religious reading."

Among the books was the second volume of the STUDIES in the SCRIPTURES. The title attracted my attention, as I had always been much interested in the time prophecies and wished I might understand them. Well, that book was a feast to me and made me long for the first volume. I determined to write the Society and see if the book was still published. The book I had was an old edition printed in Allegheny.

Just then one of the dear Colporteurs canvassed our little town and found me. Was I not answered before I had asked? I learned then for the first time that you were the author of the books as well as of the sermons. I had until then thought the book an Adventist one, and that it was only a coincident that the sermons seemed to be along the same line of thought. I purchased the first three volumes and enjoyed a great spiritual feast. I saw and understood the truth clearly, but thought myself too unworthy to enter the race.

In response to my request, my husband gave me the last three volumes as a Christmas present. I also have now THE TOWER, Diaglott and Bible Helps.

I consecrated last February and symbolized it in April. I cannot tell you the joy I have had since I found "Him whom my soul loveth." I had always been a staunch church member, but felt I was not living up to my profession. Through a deep humiliation, I was constrained to a greater hunger and thirst for righteousness. Oh, how I have been filled!

I withdrew from the church here and united with the Worcester class. The step cost me all but two of my friends here, but for everyone I lost I have gained a hundred in the Truth. Take the world, but give me Jesus. I know I am growing in the knowledge of the blessed Truth and trust, through the grace and merit of our dear Lord, to render an acceptable sacrifice.

Now, dear Brother, I wish you to take my name as one who has taken and loves the Vow. It has been such a help to me in every way, especially in governing my thoughts and words and actions.

God bless you richly for the work you are doing and grant the sermons may reach other hungry souls.

Your sister by His grace, MRS. MABEL F. BROWN.

R4886 : page 366

AN APPROVED METHOD FOR BEREAN STUDIES

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

I feel constrained to write you a few words in respect to the Berean Studies. The classes in some places are reluctant to yield even one Pilgrim address for Berean Study, saying, We have the Studies all the time, but the Pilgrim seldom.

I know just how they feel and yet those Studies are the best lessons the Church has ever had. Since they are so generally used the friends specially need the sample illustration of how they can be made both interesting and profitable. A word from you in THE WATCH TOWER, I am sure, will be appreciated and would be a great assistance to many.

When the Berean questions first appeared in THE WATCH

R4886 : page 367

TOWER they were different from what we had been forming, because I had always formed my own questions. Several times I was tempted to ignore the printed questions; yet I did not wish to do so, because, coming from you, I felt these to be additional "steps of the righteous ordered of the Lord." Now, however, having become accustomed to the Berean questions, I find them of great value and appreciate them highly. I will outline the rules I follow in Berean Studies. I will be pleased to have your criticism of them.

I do not ask the class to formulate the questions, but read the questions from THE WATCH TOWER or pamphlet. I do not address the questions to one or two of the leading ones of the class, but give them, sometimes to one and sometimes to another, reaching as nearly as possible all of the class. If someone attempts to read the answer from a book I object, reminding the one that in school as children we were not allowed to look on the book, but were supposed to have learned the lesson and to know the answer before coming to the class. The reading of the answer from the book I may call for last; or, perhaps, I read it myself, but that is after the discussion and is generally understood to be the conclusion of the lesson.

While I generally address the printed questions to individuals, sometimes I make it general and invite voluntary replies and encourage them. In some instances I have thought it advisable, for the sake of some beginner, to formulate questions additional to those printed in order to assist in bringing out some other good points. My effort continually is to draw the answers from the class and to say as little as possible myself, except by way of recapitulation.

I believe it a mistake for the leader of Berean Study to do more talking than others in the class. If in leading I have been obliged to do most of the talking throughout I consider that lesson a failure so far as my leadership is concerned, for, if it had been profitable, the class would have been anxious to speak.

Of course, I give the class opportunity for asking additional questions in line with the printed questions of the lesson; but I do not consider these questions as addressed to me

personally, desiring a personal answer, so I turn the questions, the same as the others, to the class, and seek to draw out the proper answer and to supplement the answers by some words of my own, helping to make the matter still more clear if possible.

After questions have been fully answered by the class, the leader also having given his thought, then I suggest that we call on Brother Russell to give his answer. (Then all may look in the book to note the answer given and not before.) I find it well to restate the question just before giving your answer so that the matter may be as clear as possible before the minds of all.

After hearing Brother Russell's answer I, as the leader, ask the class if there are any further remarks. Some may have occasional questions.

So far as I am able to judge, the class of International Bible Students giving most attention to the Berean Studies are spiritually and intellectually better nourished than some that are depending upon preaching. Preaching, of course, has its place; but it could not be expected that many of the dear friends have special talent along this line--nor would many of them have much time for preparation if they had the talent.

Anyway, classes that have learned to appreciate the Berean Studies and to use them, generally give these the preference as being most helpful to growth in knowledge and in grace.

Yours in His fellowship, JAMES H. COLE.

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page 367

BEREAN QUESTIONS IN SCRIPTURE STUDIES

Series VI., Study VI., Order and Discipline in the New Creation.

OCTOBER 1

(11) Does the Lord recognize the elders alone as the Body of Christ, or has any elder the right to self-appointment, or to ignore the judgment of the Church as a whole in any matter? P. 279, top.

(12) Should any brother assume public duties without an election, and what is the special advantage to the whole Ecclesia in following this Scriptural method? P. 279, par. 1.

(13) Why are not these matters, so clearly Scriptural, more generally understood and set forth? P. 279, par. 2.

THE PERIOD OF ELDERSHIP.

(14) In view of there being no Scriptural limit to the period for which an elder should be elected, what course may be appropriately followed? P. 280, par. 1.

NUMBER OF ELDERS.

(15) What should determine the number of elders in any Ecclesia? P. 280, par. 2.

(16) In the event of none being found possessed of the Scriptural qualifications, what course should be pursued in choosing an elder? P. 281, par. 1.

OCTOBER 8

WHO MAY ELECT ELDERS, AND HOW?

(17) Who may vote for elders, or make nominations? And how should the latter preferably be done? P. 281, par. 2.

(18) What disadvantage in voting by ballot for elders? P. 281, par. 3.

MAJORITIES NOT SUFFICIENT.

(19) So far as practicable, what proportion of votes should decide an election? P. 282, par. 1,2.

VARIETIES OF MINISTRIES.

(20) Read carefully the Apostle Paul's address to the Elders at Ephesus (Acts 20:17-33) and show how his words set forth the general scope of the ministry to which each individual must adapt himself and his talents as a steward. P. 283.

LAYING ON OF HANDS OF THE PRESBYTERY.

(21) Quote several Scriptures which mention the laying on of hands in the Ecclesia, and explain each in its proper connection. Pp. 283-285.

OCTOBER 15

(22) Do any of these texts signify permission or authorization to preach?

A PAID MINISTRY?

(23) Was a paid ministry the custom of the early Church? P. 285, par. 4.

(24) Had our Lord's teachings been supplemented by appeals for money, how would they have been received? P. 286, par. 1.

(25) What spirit should prompt the ministers of the Gospel of Good Tidings Unto All Men? P. 286, par. 2.

(26) How reply to the argument that extremes of "large salaries or no salaries" should be avoided? P. 287, par. 1.

(27) What was the example set by the Apostle Paul with respect to salaries? P. 287, par. 2; P. 288, top.

OCTOBER 22

(28) What was the attitude of the Lord and the Apostles on this subject? P. 288, par. 1.

(29) Is there any Scriptural intimation that the elders serving the Church at home received salaries or expense money? P. 288, par. 2.

(30) On the other hand is there Scripture forbidding the acceptance of such money, providing it was voluntarily offered by the Ecclesia? P. 288, par. 3.

DISCIPLINE IN THE ECCLESIA.--MATT. 18:15-18.

(31) Explain how the foregoing Scripture teaches that the administration of discipline is not confined to Elders, but a function of the entire Church. P. 289, par. 1.

(32) In the event that any matter of difference cannot be settled by the two preliminary steps mentioned in Matt. 18:15-18, what course should be pursued by the Elders? P. 289, par. 2, first half.

OCTOBER 29

(33) What is the object of these proceedings on the part of the Ecclesia to punish the offender? P. 289, par. 2, last half.

(34) Should the transgressors refuse to obey the Ecclesia's decision, what further steps should be taken? P. 290, par. 1.

(35) Are the faults of the offender to be made public property during these proceedings, or afterward? P. 290, par. 2.

(36) Would this procedure give rise to frequent Church trials? P. 291, par. 1.

(37) What is unquestionably the cause of the majority of Church and family troubles? And what instructions have the New Creation concerning this important matter? P. 291, par. 2.

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