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VOL. XXXIII JUNE 1 No. 10
A.D. 1912--A.M. 6040

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PUBLISHED BY
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
CHARLES T. RUSSELL, PRESIDENT
"BROOKLYN TABERNACLE," 13-17 HICKS ST.,
BROOKLYN, N. Y., U. S. A.

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1912--PERTLE SPRINGS CONVENTION--1912

The hearts of many of God's people are turned toward the beautiful Pertle Springs Chautauqua Grounds, near Warrensburg, Mo. Fourteen public speakers are being headed thither. Word reaches us of at least two carloads of visitors coming from the Pacific Coast. The railroads have granted a two-cent per mile rate. The hotel managers have given us a rate of \$1.50 per day, two in a room. We have secured some private board at \$1 per day. Applications for entertainment should be sent in at once, that you may know in advance just where to go and that your entertainers may know just whom to expect. Come seeking to give as well as to receive a spiritual blessing. For other particulars see last issue.

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SCRIPTURE MEMORY CARDS

Brother L. W. Jones, M.D., when studying medicine found great help from the use of memory-cards. Applying the principle to the study of God's Word, he has gotten out Scripture memory-cards. On the one side of the card is printed a text of Scripture. On the other side is the reference. Different colors of card classify different Bible topics. The pack consists of fifty cards. They can be used individually or in a company. The text can be cited and the quotation called for; or, the quotation can be read and the citation called for. Thus the most prominent texts of the Scriptures can be memorized and, at the same time, the memory will be generally strengthened along these lines. It is particularly convenient to have the desired Scripture at your tongue's end and very convenient to be able to turn to it in the Bible.

Brother Jones sold a considerable number of these sets, but now has turned over to the Society his entire stock. The fifty cards, neatly boxed, postpaid, sell for twenty-five cents. There are two series of them. Some who have learned the first series desire more and the second series was prepared for them.

These cards in good quantity are now in stock and subject

to your order. Have a look at them at the Convention book stall, where your orders can be placed, if you desire.

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BEREAN LESSON QUESTION BOOKS

For TABERNACLE SHADOWS and for SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vols. I., II. and V., are now in stock. Price five cents each-- fifty cents per dozen, postpaid.

Many of the Classes find these questions very helpful. The difficulty with many Classes in the past has been that not every one has the teaching ability of drawing the information of the lessons from the Class. The successful class leader has little to say except as he sums up the answer to each question after it has been discussed by the Class; or, if the question be not understood by the Class, he may often render assistance by paraphrasing it and, if possible, simplifying it.

Excellent as public preaching is we believe that the Lord's people learn more in Berean Classes than by listening to any sermon. Thought is stimulated, quickened.

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GOULD FREE LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

555 EAST SIXTH ST., SO. BOSTON, MASS.

Probably many of our readers are acquainted with those who are blind. They may do them a large amount of good by informing them that by postal card request they can obtain free reading matter by addressing as above. This literature for the blind is printed in raised characters which the blind can read. In writing state which system the person has learned to use, as the Library contains a variety. It is a Truth Library. Many of the blind are deeply appreciative of the message that a glorious day of blessing is coming to the world.

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SAUL OF TARSUS AND WHAT HE SAW

Last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born before the due time.--1 Cor. 15:8.

ST. PAUL WAS discussing the resurrection of the dead. He realized that on that great fact rested the weight of the Gospel Message. It was easy enough to prove that

Jesus had died, but to an incredulous world it was difficult to prove that He had risen from the dead; and whoever could not believe that great fact could not believe the other great facts which stand or fall with it.

For instance, the Apostle presented that Jesus had left the heavenly glory and had become a Man for the purpose of meeting the demands of the Divine Law against Adam and his race, involved by him. He could show the reasonableness of this logic. He has proven that as the whole world was condemned to death through Father Adam's disobedience it was absolutely necessary for an untainted life to be sacrificed in order to meet the penalty and to secure the release of the condemned race.

GOD WOULD NOT LEAVE HIS SON IN DEATH

The Apostle had declared that Jesus had been faithful in His ministry in fully laying down His life and that the entire matter was pleasing and acceptable to the Heavenly Father. If so, surely God would not leave His Son in death, but would raise Him from the dead. This fact the Apostle had repeatedly enunciated, showing that our Lord entered into His glory and reward and ascended up where He was before--to perfection on the spirit plane.

But all these claims fell lightly upon some of his hearers,

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who claimed that it was much more easy to believe that Jesus never died at all, but merely transmuted, than to believe that He died for our sins and rose again for our justification; hence the Apostle's frequent reference to Christ's resurrection and his insistence upon it as absolutely necessary to Christian faith, for not only would the Heavenly Father's favor toward the Lord Jesus thus be shown, but the bulk of all the holy prophecies would remain unfulfilled unless Jesus arose from the dead.

In other words, a dead Redeemer would be of no advantage; matters would be just as unfavorable for the sinners as though Jesus had never come at all. Additionally, if the resurrection of Jesus was a questionable matter, how could those who disputed that great fact acknowledge the resurrection of the Church and of the world? St. Paul emphasizes this also, declaring that "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust," as a result of the redemptive work of Jesus--His dying for man's sins and His resurrection to glory to carry out the blessings secured by His death.

"LAST OF ALL HE WAS SEEN BY ME"

Prosecuting his argument, the Apostle marshaled the whole chain of witnesses except the women who first saw the Lord on the morning of His resurrection. He says,

"He was seen of Cephas (Peter); then by the remainder of the twelve; then of above five hundred brethren at once; later, He was seen of James; then of all the Apostles," when He ascended. Then comes the text: "Last of all He was seen of me also."

There is something pathetic in this reference to his own glimpse of Jesus. It called up the period of his own bigoted persecution of the Church. It reminded him of his own responsibility in connection with the death of St. Stephen, and of the blind hatred which led him to persecute inoffensive fellow-creatures, simply because they believed that Jesus died and rose again, the very thing which he was now trying to testify to all having the hearing ear.

His memory went back to the madness which he had manifested in pursuing Christians even to Damascus, haling them to prison. Again he saw the great, blinding light from heaven, above the brightness of the noonday sun, his fall to the earth, and heard the voice speaking to him, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" (Acts 9:1-9; 26:12-19.) Again he remembered his astonishment at learning that those whom he had persecuted were not renegade and deceived Jews, but highly esteemed and acknowledged by this Great One, a glimpse of whom felled him to the earth. Ah, that was a wonderful sight! If Messiah was so great, so glorious, so powerful, he could believe in Him, he could reverence Him.

The objection which all Jews had to Jesus, and what they considered absolute proof that He was not the Messiah, was His apparent weakness, His apparent inability to accomplish the things foretold by the Prophets. They said, It is foolish to think of a man without an army and without wealth claiming to be a king. It is still more foolish for Him to claim that He is the Messianic King, who is to be above all kings, and before whom every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. They said, therefore, that Jesus must either be beside Himself, crazy, or else He was seeking to deceive the people and temporarily create a little commotion of popularity.

To them it seemed that when He was crucified a demonstration had been given that He was not the Messiah.

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Was not the Messiah to live forever, and was He not to reign successfully as King of kings and Lord of lords? Was it not, therefore, proven that any man whom the Jews or the Romans could crucify, could put to death, must have been an imposter? They considered the matter proven to a demonstration. The persecution of the followers of Jesus was merely with a view to stamping out a new religion, which, it was feared, would do harm to Israel in that it would call in question the hopes of Israel respecting a coming King and His Kingdom. Thus Saul of Tarsus had felt himself fully justified in persecuting all of that way of thinking--for "the good of the cause," as

so many persecutors have said.

A NEW VIEW OF MATTERS

The honesty of Saul of Tarsus led him to be just as honest after he got his eyes of understanding open as he had previously been with them closed. It took him a little while to get the proper focus; then he saw and could explain to others the necessity for the death of Jesus and how it was typified in the sacrifices of the Law and how the Divinely arranged Plan had made this great sacrifice in order thereby to more fully show forth the Divine Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power.

Now he saw, not only the need for Jesus to come in the flesh and to give Himself a ransom-price for all, but he saw equally the necessity for His resurrection, not in the flesh, but in the spirit, that He might be a fully qualified Ruler and Savior--not only to save His people from the Romans, the Assyrians, and from all other human enemies, but also to save them from Satan, from sin, from sickness, from sorrow, from death. Ah, now he saw how great Messiah must be in order to meet the necessities of the case!

The matter changed immediately in his mind; instead of a human Savior and Messiah and an earthly King, God had prepared a Heavenly One, partaker of the divine nature, glorious, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. Now he saw that the sufferings of Jesus had a twofold value. First, they were necessary for man's release from the death sentence, and, secondly, they were necessary as a demonstration of the loyalty of Jesus. Now he saw that God, in preparing to bring many sons to glory, determined first to prove the loyalty of Him whom He had invited to become the Captain of our Salvation, and that this was done by the arrangement which necessitated Jesus' death.

The climax of the argument was reached when he found that God not only had raised up Jesus from the dead, but that additionally he had bestowed upon Him the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature, of which Saul had a demonstration or proof in the blinding flash of light which felled him to the earth, and in the voice which said to him alone, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest."

CROWN HIM LORD OF ALL

We like to think that, as we were once blinded to many of the precious truths of God's Word, so it is with many others whose eyes of understanding have not yet opened. We like to think of St. Paul's experiences, his sincerity, even to hatred and persecution, and then his loyalty, even to stripes and imprisonment and death. We like to think of him as exemplifying possibly a large class of the opposers of the Truth.

We like to hope that all they will need to bring them

into line with God's arrangements and to make them loyal servants of righteousness will be the great light which will shine forth resplendently very soon, when the due time shall come for Messiah to take to Himself His great power and reign--when His elect Bride shall have been completed and glorified with Him. We like to remember the words of the Lord through the Prophet respecting that glorious Epoch: "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb sing"--in that day.

Where would Saul of Tarsus have ended his career if the great Redeemer had not interposed for his help? And how poorly we would have fared and how little of the Light Divine would we have seen if Divine providence had not helped us in various ways? And so with the world. It is beyond our power to give the hearing ear or the seeing eye. This is the work of the Great Physician, and His day for healing and blessing and uplifting the world we perceive to be nigh, even at the door.

Ah, yes! Now we can see that the little opening of the eyes and unstopping of the ears and healing of the lame accomplished at our Lord's first advent merely foreshadowed His coming glory and much greater work. Now we can see a reason why so many of His mighty works were done on the Sabbath days--because they were all prophetic, as the Sabbath days themselves were prophecies of the great Thousand-Year Sabbath of Messiah's glorious reign, during which all of humanity who will may enter into His rest--rest from sin and from Satan and from everything that would hinder them from a full return to the Heavenly Father's love and favor and to everlasting life.

Now we see that the great work of that thousand-year Sabbath will be the healing of the morally lame and the giving of sight and hearing to the minds now blinded and deaf under the evil influences of the great Adversary--"the god of this world [who] hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."--2 Corinthians 4:4.

ONE BORN BEFORE THE TIME

Many have remarked at the peculiarity of St. Paul's statement that he saw the Lord as one prematurely born. But, if at first the statement was dark and puzzling, now it is luminous and enlightening. His thought is this: the time for giving ocular demonstrations of the Lord's resurrection had gone by; the next manifestation of Him is to be to His saints, and after that to the world. Thus we read: "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is"--made like Him by our resurrection change from the human conditions to the spirit conditions; yea, to the divine plane.

Strictly speaking, then, the experiences of Saul of Tarsus were out of the ordinary. No one else than he alone, not even the saintly, were to see the Lord before

their resurrection change, in the end of this Age. When, therefore, he saw Jesus, he saw Him before the time--more than eighteen centuries before the time. Moreover, he saw Him as one born before the time--as one resurrected before the time. We are to have in mind the Scriptural use of this word born--that the Church must all be begotten of the Holy Spirit in order to experience the resurrection birth.

Thus, concerning our Redeemer's resurrection, we read: "He was the First-born from the dead"; and again, "He was the First-born of many brethren." So the hope of all of God's people is that the begetting of the Holy Spirit in the present time will be followed by the resurrection birth, which St. Paul describes in this same chapter, saying, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it

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is sown an animal body, it is raised a spirit body."
--I Cor. 15:43.

With these things before our mental eye we see the meaning of the Apostle in the words: "He was seen of me, also, as of one born before the time." He was not thus seen by the other Apostles. They saw Him merely as He appeared--sometimes in one form of body and with appropriate clothing, at other times in another form, and with diverse clothing. He appeared and disappeared, but they did not see Him, the New Creature; they saw merely the various forms in which He appeared. But St. Paul saw the Lord more nearly as all the saints shall see Him when they shall be born from the dead by the glorious resurrection change.

CHURCH'S GLORY TO BE GREATER THAN THAT OF THE ANGELS

One great difference between the effect of what Saul saw and what the entire glorious Church will see in the resurrection is that Saul's eyesight was injured by the sight; besides, he saw nothing very distinctly--merely a blinding light, which the voice explained to be the appearance or manifestation of Jesus. Far more precious will be the experiences of the Church. Before beholding Him who is declared to be "the express image of the Father's person," "whom no man hath seen nor can see, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto"--before this, we shall have been changed, glorified. This will enable us to see Him as He is, for the glory of the Church will be like to the glory of her Lord, and superior to the glory of the angels.

While heavenly glory does not consist exclusively of brightness, nevertheless the Scriptures everywhere seem to associate bright-shining with the heavenly ones, and would imply that the higher the station and rank the brighter will be the sheen, the glory. Thus the glory of the Heavenly Father is represented as being so great that

few could endure it; and angels and seraphim are represented as veiling their faces before the Divine glory, which so greatly transcends their own.

It should not, therefore, surprise us that the Scriptures everywhere represent that our Lord Jesus and the Church, "made partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), will have a great honor and brightness, far above that of angels and all others except that of the Heavenly Father. As the Lord Jesus was able to veil the glories of His person and to appear as a man after His resurrection, so undoubtedly He could do as respects the world, during the thousand years of His Messianic Reign.

And, similarly, it would be possible for the Church to appear as men with the glory veiled. It might appear at first as though this was what was signified through the Mosaic type when Moses, representing Messiah in glory, came down from the mountain, his face radiant, but veiled for the sake of the people. Our thought, however, is that Jesus and the Church will never thus appear in the flesh as angels have done in the past, but that on the contrary the Ancient Worthies, perfected on the human plane, will be their agents and representatives in all communications with mankind. Thus, "the Law shall go forth from Mount Zion (the Spirit Kingdom), and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (the earthly Kingdom), to every nation, people, kindred and tongue, that all may be blest if they will and attain everlasting life.

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QUICKENING OF THE MORTAL BODY

"If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."--Rom. 8:11.

EVERY TEXT should be considered in the light of its context. In the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle's argument is that by nature we are all sinners; and that God's proposition is that He will accept us as sons on a new plane if our lives be offered in consecration: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."--Rom. 12:1.

After an individual has made this presentation of his body for sacrifice, and he has been begotten of the Holy Spirit, the mortal body is counted as being dead, and his mind, his will, is reckoned as the New Creature adopted into the family of God and seeking to serve Him and to grow into His likeness, by being conformed to the likeness

of His dear Son. Therefore, in all such expressions as we find in our text and its context, the Apostle refers exclusively to the New Creature, and ignores entirely, as dead, the mortal body. It is from this standpoint that we can say of the New Creature that he is holy; that the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in him, and that the Wicked One toucheth him not.--Rom. 8:4; I John 5:18.

Those things which he formerly did he is to do no more. The Apostle says, moreover, that he would not be content merely to be dead in the flesh--in the sense of simply abstaining from sin--but that he should seek to become energetic in the service of righteousness. If we ask how this is to be done, the answer is, "by the Spirit of God." If the Spirit of God was powerful enough to raise our Lord Jesus from the dead, it will quicken, or energize, our mortal bodies. When our bodies have been reckoned as alive, quickened, they are energized in opposition to sin and in harmony with righteousness. This, then, is the Apostle's thought in our text.

It is well that we should have in mind the thought that the consecration of our bodies to the Lord may permit us to do more in His service than we could have done if we had not been begotten of the Holy Spirit. We are not to expect that this energizing will work a miracle, such as the restoration of a person in the last stage of consumption, etc. The Lord does not work in this way. But the Lord's people would do well to cultivate the thought that if it be the Lord's will they shall be able to do something in His service. If we have this confidence, every one of us can do much more than if we do not have it, for it gives new energy of mind and body.

A great deal of harm is done in the world by people who not only have a wrong opinion themselves, but who spread contagion of thought to others. We see to what a large extent this is carried on by Christian Scientists, who deny that there is either pain or death.

While we do not advocate this course, yet we should not, on the other hand, imagine that our bodies are in worse condition than they really are, but in a wise and judicious manner should seek to use them in the Lord's service. Instead of discouraging others we would do well to encourage them to realize that it is largely according

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to their faith that they shall be able to do anything. If we have no strong desire to accomplish something we shall become weak, sickly.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE POWER OF MIND OVER BODY

To some extent the world recognizes the power of the mind over the body. An account in the newspapers recently told of two great, strong men who were sick in bed as the result of the coddling of their mother, who

should have encouraged them to get up and take a little air and exercise. Another case reported was that of a woman who imagined that she was glass. At first she used to get up while the attendant put the room in order; but later she would not sit up. After she had been in bed for a year or two, the doctor told her that there was nothing the matter with her body, but with her mind. One day her relatives got her up in the middle of the room and left her there, telling her that there was nothing wrong except her attitude of mind. At first she declared that she would go to pieces. She did not, however. With proper encouragement she lost her fear of breaking and began to improve; in due time she was quite well.

You have heard of the professor upon whom some college boys played a trick. They planned to meet the professor on his way to school and to test the power of the mind over the body. The first boy met him, as they had agreed, when he was going out of his house, and told him that he was not looking well. He replied, "I am feeling quite well." Another met him a block away, then another a little further on, telling him that he looked pale and sick. Yet another met him and said, "You are a sick man." Still another greeted him with, "Professor A, you should be in bed." The next one exclaimed, "I must help

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you home, for you are in no condition to be at school!" The professor went home sick. All this occurred within fifteen minutes. The story is said to be true.

All through life we are either helping or hindering others. Tell people something good; seek to cheer them, and when yourself ailing, follow the good suggestions you make to others. If you have a headache, moaning will not mend matters. Do not think so much about it; and by forgetting it, help nature to get rid of it. Nobody knows just how the power of the mind over the body is effected. The claim is that certain attitudes of mind favor certain microbes in the body. Medical journals state that children have died in spasms after having been suckled by mothers who have gotten into a rage a short time before nursing the children. It is well for all to have meek and quiet spirits, for faith, love, hope and kindness make for health.

It is very reasonable and logical that the Lord should have given us the most wonderful power in our minds to make people feel better, to control muscle and nerve. One's conduct in the sick room has an influence upon the patient. One should speak kindly and cheerfully. If nothing that will be helpful can be said truthfully, it is far better to be quiet or to remain outside of the sick room.

A sister supposed to be dying once sent for us. Upon entering the room we said, "Well, Sister, you are looking better than we had expected to see you. You are

better!" "I am feeling better," she answered. "When did you begin to feel better?" we inquired. "When I heard you in the hall," she said. She is living today and married, and has a child. Yet we might have helped her to die, and might have had a funeral service instead of a marriage ceremony.

"WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST"

It is well for us to consider the question: If the natural mind has such an effect upon the body, how should it be with those who can claim, "We have the mind of Christ"? What effect should this mind, or disposition, which is loving, generous, kind, forgiving toward our fellows, and reverential, loyal and obedient toward God, have upon the body? Does not the Apostle declare that if the spirit, or mind, of God dwell in them their mortal bodies shall be quickened?

He does; but do not misunderstand the Apostle's teaching. In the preceding verse (Rom. 8:10) he states, "If Christ be in you the body is dead"--not literally dead, but reckonedly dead, in that the human will has died and that the will of God in Christ has been accepted instead. The will is dead to sinful things; it does not love nor practise them as once it did. His argument is that such a deadness to sin, although desirable, should not stop at that point; we should by God's grace seek to get alive to righteousness and to be as active in its service as once we were alive to sin and active in its service. He proceeds to show that this, although a great change, is possible to us; and he tells us how it is to be accomplished.

He says that the mighty Spirit of God, which could and did raise our Lord from literal death, is able to quicken (make alive) to the service of righteousness these very bodies once alive to sin, but now, by God's grace, mortified, killed, "dead to sin." He therefore urges all who have the spirit, or mind of Christ, not only to be dead to sin, but to permit the Spirit of Christ in them to make them alive to holiness and to God's service in general. He shows them further that the new mind of Christ which they have received is a spirit of adoption into God's family as sons, and that if they are sons they are not only "free" but must bear fruit unto holiness, and that their joint-heirship with Christ as sons depends upon this quickening of their mortal bodies --"if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."--Rom. 8:17.

All who catch the real sense of this passage will see that it has no reference to physical quickening and immunity from pain and sickness, but to a quickening, or energizing by the Lord's Spirit so as to be, not only willing, but glad, to "suffer with Him." Hence those who see their High Calling should not expect exemption from sufferings and trials and difficulties; and the usual aches and pains which come to the Lord's people, as well as to the world, in a natural way, should be treated as the

world treats them, but borne with greater patience and cheerfulness.

St. Paul clearly marks the distinction between our new mind, which, consecrated in Christ, is accepted as the New Creature, holy and acceptable to God, and our mortal body, which he calls "this dead body"--originally dead, under Divine sentence, because of sin, but redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and justified, and then included in our sacrifice when we gave our little all in consecration to the Lord, as a living sacrifice, to be dead with Christ, to suffer with Him even unto death. He declares that those who are walking after the Spirit, seeking to serve the Lord in Spirit and in truth, from the heart, are freed from condemnation, and that they do not now walk after the flesh, wishing to fulfil its desires. --Rom. 8:1,4.

And here we are to distinguish closely between walking after the Spirit and walking up to the Spirit. We should, of course, follow as closely as possible to the spirit of Truth and righteousness, and yet we cannot hope

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to walk up to the spirit of the Divine requirements so long as we are in the imperfect flesh, though we may strive in this direction continually. One thing is positive, however--we must not walk after the flesh. To do so would imply that we had lost the new mind, the new disposition, the new will; that we had become dead to those hopes which had led to our consecration.

The Apostle urges that all remember that one who is "in the flesh," who lives in harmony with the sinful propensities of his fallen, fleshly nature, is not pleasing to God; and that such yielding to the flesh, of course, if persisted in, will end in death. He proceeds to reason that if the spirit, or mind, or disposition of God (the spirit of holiness) dwells in one, he cannot be in sympathetic accord with the fallen human nature, its appetites and ambitions. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is not of the Body of Christ. Christ's Spirit is not a Spirit of harmony with sin, but of opposition to sin; He laid down His life to vanquish sin and to deliver mankind from its power and dominion. Therefore, whoever claims to have the Spirit of Christ, but who loves and wilfully practises sin, and with his mind serves sin, deceives himself; for he has neither part nor lot in Christ.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS POWERFUL

St. Paul proceeds further along this same line, arguing that our adoption into God's family, our begetting to newness of heart and mind, and our acceptance thus as members of the Body of Christ, while it means, first of all, that the body is ignored and reckoned as dead because of sin and that only our spirits, or minds, are reckoned as righteous and alive--the beginning of our eternal

existence--nevertheless, this good condition is not to be considered the limit of our ambition and attainment in Christ-likeness.

On the contrary, we are to remember that the Spirit of God is powerful; that in the case of our Lord Jesus it was powerful enough to raise Him from the dead. And as we become more imbued with and controlled by the Holy Spirit of God in our hearts, in our minds, Divine power will come to us gradually through this channel of the Holy Spirit, which will permit a figurative raising of our mortal bodies from their death-state into activities of spiritual life in the service of the Lord, for the assurance given us through the Apostle is that if God's Spirit dwells in us in sufficient measure--abundantly--He will energize our mortal bodies--not our immortal, resurrection bodies.

It is our hope that in due time the Lord by His Spirit will give us new bodies in the resurrection; and that those bodies will be immortal, perfect in every respect; and that then, not only our minds, but our bodies also will be in fullest harmony with God and His every Law and work of righteousness. That condition will be glorious; it is already a glorious prospect. But the Apostle holds before us that even our present, mortal bodies, sentenced, then justified, reckoned dead because of sin and consecrated, may be so quickened or energized that, instead of being any longer servants of sin, or even merely dead to it, they may, under the careful watchfulness of the new mind, be used as servants of righteousness, of Truth.

This means, of course, a High Christian development, a large attainment toward "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The measure of the fulness of Christ, the maturity and growth necessary to its attainment, involves the "putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ," and is not the work of a moment, nor of an hour, nor of a month, nor of a year. It is the work of a life time. But unless it is begun, it will never be completed. And, indeed, we may be sure that we can never fully put on Christ's characteristics. However, this is the standard for which every one of the Lord's people must continually strive.

The Lord will see our endeavor, our strenuous fighting to put off the old nature, to put off "the works of the flesh" and to be clothed with the garments of righteousness suitable to our relationship to Him, and our success will be proportionate to our attainment of the mind, or disposition of Christ--holy conformity to the will of the Father in all things. How comforting in this connection is the promise of our Lord, that our "Heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit (the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of wisdom) to them that ask Him than are earthly parents to give good gifts unto their children!"--Luke 11:13.

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REPROVE WORKS OF DARKNESS

--JUNE 30.--EPHESIANS 5:11-21.--

Text:--"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging."--Prov. 20:1.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS are used as figures and as synonyms for truth and untruth, righteousness and sin. Thus, "God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all." Thus also Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world." Thus also He said of His followers when He was leaving them, "Ye are the light of the world"; "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

On the contrary, Satan is styled the "Prince of Darkness"; and his rule of unrighteousness is styled "the kingdom of darkness"; and those subject to his influence are styled "the children of darkness." Evil works contrary to the Lord and righteousness are styled "works of darkness."

When our first parents sinned they forfeited fellowship with God, and because of disobedience became children of the Adversary; and Jesus said to such in his day, "Ye are of your father, the Devil, because his works ye do." (John 8:44.) Thus our entire race came under the influence of the darkness of sin. A night of sin, sorrow and death has followed for now six thousand years. We have the promise of a glorious morning when Messiah shall reign, when "Satan shall be bound for a thousand years," and when "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams."

But this morning has not yet come; we have it merely by faith, by hope. God's promises respecting that glorious morning are figuratively called "light," and these constitute the Bible. So the Scriptures, after telling us that darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen, tell us also that the Bible is a light to the path of God's people in the midst of this darkness. "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a lantern to my footsteps." (Psa. 119:105.) St. Peter said, "We have a more sure Word of prophecy, to which we do well that we take heed, as unto

a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn."--
2 Pet. 1:19.

LIGHT REPROVES DARKNESS

In the present time, therefore, the masses of the world --deluded, enslaved and intoxicated by ignorance, superstition and the wiles of the Adversary--are generally sympathetic with the darkness wherein they are. They were born in it and are so accustomed to it that if brought immediately into the presence of the light they would be in distress. There are not many light-bearers in the world anyway. True, the census reports four hundred millions of Christians, but alas! the vast majority give no sign of ever having seen the true light, and many of those who did receive the light put it under a bushel, until it was extinguished.

Surely it is as true today as it was in Jesus' day that a very small number of humanity, comparatively, have the true light of the Gospel of God, the Holy Spirit illuminating their minds and hearts, and who set this light upon a candlestick that it may give light in the midst of darkness.

But although these are few in number, they are very precious to the Lord. He calls them His saints, His jewels, and tells us that at His second coming, prior to the setting up of His Kingdom to rule the world, these, as His jewel class, shall be gathered to Himself beyond the veil--changed by the power of the First Resurrection from human to the divine nature. These He tells us He will gather as His true "wheat," in the Harvest of this Age, into His heavenly garner--"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."--Matt. 13:43.

It is this latter class that the Apostle addresses in this lesson--the same class which the Savior addressed saying, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." (Luke 12:32.) When the Father shall give these the Kingdom, as joint-heirs with their Redeemer, everything will be changed. The Prince of Darkness will be bound for a thousand years. The Prince of Light will shine forth to scatter all the darkness and miasma of sin, sorrow, ignorance and superstition.

THE LIGHT-BEARERS' RESPONSIBILITY

In today's lesson the Apostle is explaining the responsibility of these light-bearers. They represent God in this dark, benighted world; they represent the Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power of God. They are not able to let all of this glorious light so shine before men as to scatter the gross darkness of the present time, but they can do much to glorify their Father and can measurably scatter the thick darkness and bring in a sort of twilight at least to some. Obligation to do this is laid upon all of them.

These are not expected to convert the world, but merely to find a sufficient number of similar characters to themselves to complete the foreordained membership in

the Church, the Bride class, the joint-heirs. Faithfulness and zeal in this service will determine whether or not they will be worthy of having a place in the Bride class, and, if worthy, how high a station of honor they may occupy. Let us give heed gladly to the Divine Word respecting our obligation.

We must "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." How searching, how positive--absolutely no fellowship with them! More than this, we must not be content with a negative opposition, but must reprove them. However wisely we may seek to fulfil these requirements, they are sure to bring to us the enmity, the disfavor and the disappointment of many whom we love, and whose good opinion we strongly desire. But as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ we must be loyal, we must be faithful. He that is ashamed of the Master and His Word and the principles of righteousness for which He stands, of him will the Savior be ashamed when He comes to establish His Kingdom, when He comes to reckon with His servants.

Evidently the Apostle does not mean that we shall undertake to reprove everything that is out of accord with our high ideals of the Divine Law and the Divine will, because he here mentions the things to be reproved, saying, "It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret"--uncleanness, impure practices, the Apostle evidently had in mind. We must manifest our disapproval when we are in close contact with such things.

This does not mean that we shall leave the preaching of the Gospel to go "slumming," to do "muck-raking." It may not mean that we shall even publicly denounce the evil, but it surely does mean that our lives shall be so contrary to all sinful and impure practices that all may take knowledge that we have been with Jesus, and have learned of Him. This is evidently the Apostle's thought in verse 13. It is not necessary for us to suppose that the world is in full sympathy with all the darkness and sin prevalent. On the contrary, as the Apostle suggests (verse 14), some are asleep and do not, therefore, realize the distinction between light and darkness. Some of these, if thoroughly awake, might be glad to know of Christ and the true light.

WALK YE CIRCUMSPECTLY

In view of these things, said the Apostle, the followers of Jesus should be careful, circumspect in the walk of life, not foolish, but wise, not squanderers of time, but redeeming the time, purchasing it back from worldly cares and pleasures, to have the more to use in the Master's service, realizing that the days are evil and that all our energies are needful if we would "fight a good fight" for the light as against the darkness of sin. To do this will require that we study and understand the will of the

Lord.

If others are drunk with excessive use of wine, let us be filled with a different kind of wine--with the Holy Spirit. If others seek to find joy and solace in intoxicants, let us find ours in being filled with the mind of Christ. This spiritual refreshment will lead us to psalms and hymns, and to make merry in our hearts to the Lord, and to be thankful for God's favor in Christ.

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IT IS NOT THE DEED WE DO

"It is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be ever so fair,
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with holy care
In the heart of the deed so fair.

"The love is the priceless thing,
The treasure our treasure must hold;
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
Or tell the worth of the gold
By the love that cannot be told."

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SINS NEVER TO BE FORGIVEN

--JULY 7.--MARK 3:20-35.--

Text:--"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."--John 3:19.

JOHN THE BAPTIST declared of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease"; and so it was. After John was put into prison Jesus' ministry became more and more public, especially through the numerous works performed by Him. The multitudes followed the Great Teacher, and His friends became solicitous for Him, for even they feared and said, "He is beside Himself"--so quickly had His course changed from one of privacy to one of publicity.

The Scribes and Pharisees considered themselves the representatives of the Jewish orthodoxy and qualified to pass upon everything theological; and indeed the public waited for their message, saying, "Have any of the Scribes and Pharisees believed on Him?" Hence Jesus declared that these representatives of Divine things were doubly

responsible, for they would neither enter into discipleship themselves, to be members of the Kingdom which Jesus preached, nor would they permit the public to become His followers if they could help it.

Jesus was at the time in Galilee, in the vicinity of Capernaum. Certain of the Scribes who had come down from Jerusalem felt it their duty to warn the public against becoming too interested in this Man and His teachings, and thus ignoring the long-established theories for which they and the Pharisees stood.

That Jesus did many miracles they could not dispute, and that He specially and on many occasions cast out demons they could not deny. They explained this, however, by saying that Jesus had collusion with Beelzebub (Satan), and that by the power of that Prince of Darkness He was able to cast out demons. But Jesus answered that if it was true that Satan had turned reformer and was breaking down his own power and opposing his own minions, the demons, then it proved that his kingdom would soon fall entirely.

The fact that today many religious systems practice one kind or another of faith-healing is claimed to be a mark of Divine approval, on the strength of our Lord's words. Yet we have, in opposition to this, to remember that those who claim to exercise this power very generally deny the very existence of the Gospel of Christ. Some of them deny that man is a sinner at all, and declare that there is no such thing as sin. Practically all of them deny the redemptive value of Christ's death. Practically all of them deny that He will come again and establish His Kingdom and through it bring to mankind the promised blessings of restitution to human perfection and to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary.-- Acts 3:19-21.

There is only one answer to make to the claim that these faith-healings prove the truth of these various antagonistic doctrines, and that answer is the one which Jesus here states. If their faith-healing power be not of God it must be of the Adversary; and if it be of the Adversary, it proves that he is upholding false and contradictory doctrines, and that his house or dominion is more or less divided and in straits; and this implies that the collapse of the dominion of this Prince of Darkness is nigh. This view is more and more impressing itself upon Bible students.

BLASPHEMING THE HOLY SPIRIT

Addressing the Pharisees, who charged Him with being Satan's prime minister and agent, Jesus declared that all manner of sin and blasphemy which men commit are forgivable, except one kind, and this kind can never be forgiven--it is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The Savior did not mean that the Scribes had said something against the Holy Spirit of God in an abstract way, but apparently they had perceived that our Lord's teachings

were pure, holy, helpful, elevating to His hearers, honoring to God, and that He spake as never man spake; but after all these evidences of Jesus' holiness and relationship to God they called him a relative and representative of Satan.

Jesus did not say that the Scribes and Pharisees had committed the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Some of them may have done so, and others of them may have been partially in ignorance of what they did; and the sin against the Holy Spirit could not be committed in ignorance. It would be a wilful attributing of holy things to an unholy power or source. Jesus did not judge or condemn the Scribes, for He declared that He had not come to judge the world, to condemn it, but quite to the contrary, to die for it, to redeem it, to purchase it at the cost of His life.

Our Lord did, however, give the warning reproof that those who could thus see the righteousness of His teachings, and how He glorified God in His words and actions, and who could then impute all of this to Satan, must be to a considerable extent perverse in their hearts, and if so, they would be in great danger of eternal condemnation, the sentence of the Second Death; they would be like "natural brute beasts," made to be taken and destroyed. (2 Pet. 2:12; Acts 3:23.) Jesus made this statement because they said that the spirit that was in Him was an unclean spirit--that He was actuated by one of the fallen angels and not by the Divine Spirit.

"HATH NEVER FORGIVENESS"

The Bible teaches that the penalty of Adam's sin was death--cutting off from life--but that under Divine providence the work of Jesus is to release all mankind from that death sentence, and give to all an opportunity of returning to harmony with God by bringing all to a clearer knowledge of the Truth. To some this knowledge comes now, with the privilege of becoming members of the Bride class, joint-heirs with Jesus. To such as accept this privilege and receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit, the test of life or death everlasting begins.

But with the world this is not the time of testing respecting life or death everlasting. For them the next Age, the period of Messiah's Kingdom, will be the testing time, and their privilege will be to attain human perfection, otherwise to be cut off in the Second Death. Meantime, whatever light they may be enjoying will be either helpful or injurious, as they shall deal with it. If they allow it to have an uplifting influence in their lives they will be that much more advantaged when they shall come under the Kingdom influences and tests; they will not need to have so many stripes.

On the contrary, those who violate their consciences and ignore the light which they enjoy and sin against it, will find themselves proportionately degraded when they shall come under the Kingdom influences and tests. The

Scribes of this lesson had so misused their education and opportunities as to be in great danger of becoming so degraded that even the Kingdom influences would not bring them to a condition worthy of everlasting life.

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BROTHERS, SISTERS AND MOTHER

Today's study closes with the Master's explanation of the class to which He acknowledged relationship. The multitudes who flocked to His miracles, and to hear Him speak as never man spake, were chiefly the poor and the publicans and sinners, and such as were not great nor very religious according to the standards of their time. Their degradation, their realization that they were sinners, made the Master's "wonderful words of life" especially attractive to them. No one else offered them hope. All others declared that God would not notice them. The religionists of that day reprov'd Jesus because of His recognition of the lower classes, but none were so low, so degraded, that He would not lend them His helping hand if they had a disposition to return to the Father's House. He was indeed the Friend of all willing to come to the Father by Him.

An opportunity of showing the multitudes the basis for His sympathy came when Jesus' mother and brethren on the outside of the throng sent Him word that they desired to see Him. How beautiful the lesson of the Great Teacher's breadth of spirit, regardless of caste and class, when he said, "Who is My mother and My brethren?" And then, looking toward His disciples who were sitting near Him taking in His teachings, He said, "Behold, My mother and My brethren! for whosoever will do the will of God, the same is My brother and My sister and My mother."--Matt. 12:46-50.

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THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM

--JULY 14.--MARK 4:1-20.--

Text:--Receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls."--James 1:21.

THE SALVATION open at the present time has been obtainable only through faith, and faith is dependent upon a measure of knowledge, or revelation, and this knowledge, or revelation, came to us from God, for said St. Peter, "Holy men of old spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." God in this Age is calling a class

possessed of ears of appreciation for His Message. These are mainly the weary and heavy laden and sin-sick, chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith.

It is not enough that they hear the Message, not enough that additionally they accept it, turn from sin and consecrate their lives to God and His service and be accepted of Him, through the merit of Jesus, and be begotten of the Holy Spirit. From that moment they may be said to be saved and to have everlasting life, if they

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follow a certain course. That course includes a continual study of the Divine instructions and promises and the exercise of faith and prayer, and obedience and trust, even unto the end.

The point of this lesson is to show the importance of having the right kind of spiritual food, and of using it and not allowing the new nature to become choked by earthly hopes, aims or ambitions. Such as thus overcome will be inheritors with Jesus of His glorious Messianic Kingdom of a thousand years, which is to bless Israel and, through Israel, all the families of the earth.

Jesus gave the parable of the Sower of the "good seed," some of which fell by the wayside, and was devoured by the fowls; some fell on rocky ground where it had no depth of earth, and brought forth no fruitage; some amongst thorns, which choked it; some into the good ground, which yielded thirty fold, sixty fold and one hundred fold. The disciples were perplexed and unable to understand it and inquired of the Great Teacher its meaning.

His answer was that He was quite willing that they should understand the parable, and that it related to the Kingdom of God, but it was not to be understood by outsiders. He explained that it was for this reason that He always spoke in parables, so that the general public might see and hear and not understand, because the masses even of the Jews were not in a heart condition to understand and be profited by these lessons respecting the Kingdom. Only such persons as desired to become members of the Kingdom class and were also willing to undertake the stringent conditions of the "narrow way"--only such were to fully and clearly understand the parables of the Kingdom. This is in harmony with all of God's dealings in the present time. We read again, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise (toward God) shall understand." And again we read, "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His Covenant."

In Verse 13 the Master indicates that this parable would serve as a general key to His followers for their interpretation of all His parables. "Seed" does not mean literal seed, "birds" do not mean birds, "thorns" do not mean thorns, etc. Proceeding, the Great Teacher expounded

the parable as follows: (1) The seed that was sown represents the Word of God. More than this, it represents that particular element or feature of God's Word which relates to the Kingdom.

This is shown by St. Matthew's account of the same parable (Matt. 13:19): "When anyone heareth the Word (Message of the Kingdom), and understandeth it not, then cometh the Wicked One and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he that receiveth the seed by the wayside." Our lesson says that the Wicked One meant is Satan. Satan and his evil agents are therefore represented in the parable by "birds," and the lesson is that however much of the Gospel of the Kingdom we may read or hear preached, we lose the benefit of that which we do not understand.

Evidently, then, much of the Bible study and much of the religious reading is lost, because not understood. The secondary lesson is that one reason why the "good seed" does not enter into the understanding is that the heart is not in a receptive attitude. Like the wayside path, it is hard. Such hard hearts, selfish hearts, proud hearts, are of the kind which the Savior does not wish to have understand His parables nor understand the glorious Kingdom Plan which they expound.

(2) The seed sown in the stony place represents those who, when they hear the Message of the Kingdom, are delighted. They say, How good that sounds! What a grand time there will be when Messiah rules in righteousness to bless the world and lift up the poor, degraded members of Adam's family! And how great is the privilege of becoming members of the Bride of Christ, to be associated with Him in His glorious Kingdom work! But the class represented by the stony ground have little depth of character; they are merely emotional.

The "Seed," or Message of the Kingdom, which these heard with such delight at first, never matures in their hearts, because they are too shallow, too superficial in

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their love of righteousness. Below the surface those are hard hearts and selfish, and so, when they find that the good Seed of the Kingdom is unpopular and that it will bring them a certain amount of reproach and contempt and perhaps persecution--then all their ardor oozes out, their zeal is at an end. The Kingdom Message fails to produce in them the fruitage desired. The trouble was not with the Seed nor with the Sower, nor with the sun of persecution necessary for the ripening--the fault lay in the fact that their hearts were not right; they were hard, stony.

(3) The seed sown in the thorny ground represents those who have good hearts and have heard the Message of the Kingdom and appreciate it and rejoice in it, but their hearts are divided. They allow the cares of this life and the love of riches to have such a share of their

heart's affections that the Kingdom Message does not have the opportunity to bring forth such fruitage as will be pleasing to the Lord.

Let us note carefully that these thorns do not, as some suggest, represent gambling devices, card parties, saloons and other places of ill-repute, nor secret sins and vices. None of those things should appeal to Christians at all. The Master distinctly tells us that the thorns represent "the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches." Thus every Christian man or woman who has received the Message of the Kingdom and has allowed the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches to choke and frustrate his prospects as respects the Kingdom is represented in this parable. Very nice people, hospitable, educated, etc., belong to this class of the parable represented by the thorny ground.

(4) According to the parable there will be three classes of believers who will attain the Kingdom--or we may say, they will all be one class in the sense that they will bring forth the one kind of fruitage and be acceptable to the Lord as joint-heirs in His Kingdom, but the differences between them will be in the amount of fruitage such yield--some thirty fold, some sixty fold and some a hundred fold.

The Lord does not explain the differences between these fruitages, but we may well understand that the amount of fruitage will be measured by the amount of love and zeal in the heart. The fully appreciative and the fully loving will be the most energetic to know and to do the Master's will, and they will bring forth the largest fruitage--a hundred fold--and they, too, will have the chief places in the Kingdom.

St. Paul declares that as star differs from star in glory, so it will be with those who attain unto the First Resurrection--all will come forth glorious, but some will blaze with a more resplendent brilliancy, because of their great zeal, and therefore their great likeness to their Redeemer and Lord. Jesus likewise mentions the distinctions amongst those who will sit with Him in His Throne. He assured James and John that, if they were willing to drink of His cup and be baptized into His death, they should surely sit with Him in His Throne; but as to whether or not they would have the chief places of honor and distinction was not for Him to say. Those places will be given according to the Father's determination; that is to say, according to principles of justice, of merit.

Those will have the places of honor next to the Redeemer, who, in this life, will manifest to God the greatest harmony with His character, in their zeal, their love for God, the Truth and the brethren.

We are not to understand that those people represented by the thorny ground and the wayside will suffer eternal torments because of their unfaithfulness in respect to the Kingdom, nor are we to understand that others, who do not hear about the Kingdom in the present life at all, will on this account suffer eternal torment. They will

all, however, lose the grand privilege and glorious blessing of participating in the Kingdom, whatever they may obtain under the restitution blessings which that Kingdom will inaugurate for the blessing of mankind in general.

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BROTHER RUSSELL'S EPISTLE TO PILGRIMS

In April the letter below was sent to the Pilgrim Brethren. Now we publish it for the benefit of all our readers, at the suggestion of some of the Pilgrims. One of these expresses his reasons for suggesting the publication of the letter, as follows:--

BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:--The sweet, Holy Spirit of the Master's Love and the tender care for the sacred interests of the Lord's flock shines out so beautifully in your letter to the Pilgrim Brethren that my heart responds in the same spirit to assure you that every item of your counsel is carefully noted.

The spirit of your letter is so overflowing with the love of the Master that it would seem to me that its publication in THE WATCH TOWER would serve the Cause most effectively.

(1) It would help all the friends of the Truth to see the beautiful relationship that exists between yourself and the Pilgrim Brethren and give a true expression of the animus prompting the service. Some of the friends quite overlook this and fail completely to grasp the loving relationship between yourself and the brethren in the field.

(2) It would enable all the friends to see that the Pilgrims are faithfully following the instructions of the Office when they call attention to the Colporteur service, the privileges of the Extension Work, the blessing of the family Manna at breakfast, and the interests of family worship. The endeavor thus to look after the interests of the dear "flock" is not a desire to make a record, or to show a spirit of officiousness, but is the humble love of the Master for His true "sheep," manifested unobtrusively in those who in His providence He entrusts with this service.

TO THE PILGRIM BROTHERS OF THE I.B.S.A.:--

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Redeemer! I often wish that I could meet you personally and say a few words and hear from you. I will take this opportunity of giving you my little message inaudibly and without the expense of a regular journey. I want to refresh your memories respecting some things which I have already said, but which, it appears, will slip from the memories of some of your number. My experience in the work and knowledge of conditions are the basis for the following counsels:

(1) Avoid as much as possible all unkind references to Christian ministers or others who differ from us in

Bible interpretation. Preach the Gospel! Let its mighty power do the work. In referring to others, speak as sympathetically as possible, endeavoring to make apologies and allowances rather than to condemn, which is not our province. Avoid so far as possible all discussion of the immortality of the soul, the Trinity and our Lord's presence. The time may yet come for wrangling over these things, but we believe it has not yet arrived. Take your cue, please, from the DAWNS, TOWERS and sermons, and be sure to make your statements less rather than more pungent and specific. The people are prejudiced along these lines. Experience shows that they can be much better reached otherwise, and after they come to understand other matters of the Truth--when these matters so difficult for them become easy.

(2) By precept, as well as by example, you can help all of the dear friends along the lines mentioned and

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help the Cause much. The Truth has suffered more from the unwisdom of its friends than from anything its enemies have said.

(3) Continue to give my love to all the dear Classes and individuals in the Truth as you meet them. I love to think of you all as in a measure representatives of myself as well as of the Lord, and I believe that the friends get most good from the Pilgrim visits when they view them from this standpoint. Usually, except on Sundays, you will have plenty of time aside from the meetings to look after the lame, halt, blind and sick of the "sheep"--to carry them crumbs of comfort, to help bind up their wounds, or to encourage them in the good way. I trust that this opportunity for service is not neglected. It is one of the most important. Sometimes a dear "sheep" will become entangled and cease to attend the meetings. It is a part of your shepherding work to look after just such cases--to hunt them up and to help them back to fellowship if possible, or, failing in this, to encourage them to remain loyal to the Lord whatever their outward conditions.

(4) As representatives of the Society, the friends will naturally inquire of you respecting the Colporteur work, the Volunteer work, etc., or, if they fail to ask and you see no activity along these lines, it would be your duty and privilege to bring up the question and inquire to what extent the service of the Lord is going forward. Make inquiries about Classes where they have a surplus of talent and encourage the Class Extension work. Keep in memory that you are not speaking for yourself merely nor especially, but that you are the Society's representative and, above all, along this line in your present work, the Lord's representative. Be careful, therefore, that your counsels shall be encouraging and helpful, being not carelessly given.

(5) As you go to the various homes please give the

dear friends to understand that I have requested you to notice whether or not the HEAVENLY MANNA is used at breakfast, dinner, supper, or some time, and whether or not an opportunity is sought to have family worship or giving of thanks at the table. Assure them that our interest is not prompted by any other motive than that of their good. So sure do we feel that prayer and consideration of spiritual things is essential to spiritual growth that we fear that all the dear friends who allow business, pleasure, or anything to come between themselves and the Lord are separating themselves from the spirit of Divine fellowship which the Lord encourages. Remind them also at a convenient time of the great blessing that is being experienced by some in connection with the continuous reading of the Six Volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES every year--ten to twelve pages a day. We are leaky vessels, and the Truth gradually ebbs away unless we replenish.

(6) It is our supposition that all who are deeply interested in the Present Truth and who see it from the viewpoint in THE WATCH TOWER are interested in the weekly sermons. We assume that they would be interested for their own sakes and interested additionally for the sake of millions of others who are being thus reached. All such will desire to have regularly some paper publishing the sermons. Generally we can supply them cheaper than they could otherwise obtain them.

But another matter should be borne in mind, namely, that their subscriptions should go to such paper or papers as need some encouragement--even though it should cost more--even though in some respects it should not be as pleasing to them as another. As it is, two or three papers have immense lists of our readers--far more than their share--while other papers get comparatively small encouragement and are always in danger of becoming discouraged and dropping the service. The best general rule for friends to follow is to send subscriptions to THE WATCH TOWER Office and to take the paper published nearest to their home, which carries the one or the three-column service--whichever they prefer. We make special mention of this because some of the dear friends have been unintentionally working at cross purposes in this matter, seeming not to recognize the wiser course.

This year we are planning for three General Conventions, and I hope that we can arrange that each of you shall have a chance to attend one of them. I am expecting to be at all, and therefore hope to see all of you. The location for the first of these will be near Warrensburg, Mo. (Chautauqua), June 1-8; the second at Toronto, Can., June 30-July 7, and the third at Washington, D.C., July 6-14. The object in having the three Conventions this year is to accommodate those who cannot travel so far as is necessary when there is only one Convention. We shall expect about fifteen hundred at each of these Conventions--perhaps two thousand.

With much Christian love, your brother and servant
in the Lord, C. T. RUSSELL.

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

APPLIES TO THE BEGOTTEN ONES

Question.--To whom do the words in Heb. 6:4-6 apply --"It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world [Age] to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance"?

Answer.--The conditions mentioned in the passage above quoted are all more or less intertwined. That is to say, the one who has been made partaker of the heavenly gift of justification is sanctified, begotten of the Holy Spirit; for only in that way can he get God's evidence respecting his justification. No one is justified by merely believing that Jesus lived or that Jesus died. In order to come to the point of justification and have the merit of Christ imputed, he must previously have presented his body a living sacrifice; and faith in the Lord Jesus must accompany this presentation.

Anyone having done all in his power--having turned from sin, having believed in Jesus as the Redeemer, and having presented his body a living sacrifice--must next receive the imputation of Jesus' merit to make up his shortcomings, to cover his blemishes, in order that the Heavenly Father may be able to accept the sacrifice; for no imperfect thing can come upon the altar of the Lord. It requires the merit of Christ to make good what is lacking in the one who presents himself in sacrifice; and only those who thus believe and present their bodies in sacrifice are the recipients of Christ's merit by imputation; and only such are begotten of the Holy Spirit. God's arrangement is that no one can be justified unless he has made a full consecration, after having already turned from sin. Christ would not impute His merit to any except such as make this full consecration; and the Father would not accept by begetting with the Holy Spirit any others than those who have done so.

Those who have received justification have at the

same time received the begetting of the Holy Spirit, which is "the power of the Age to come." The falling away of such, the Apostle says, would mean that they could never be renewed again. Why? Because they have had their share of the blessing of Christ. Christ's death was to bring a blessing--and only one--to every member of Adam's race--one full blessing, a complete blessing, such

a blessing as will enable every member of the race--if he will, when he understands it--to come fully and completely into harmony with God and thus to have eternal life. But after he has received his full blessing and then has rejected it, there is no hope in his case. He can never justify himself. He has had the merit of Christ and has repudiated it. There is no hope of renewing such a one, says the Apostle. The fate of such would not, of course, be eternal torment, but destruction--the Second Death.

THE DICTIONARY DEFINITION

Question.--Is there any difference between "Death" and "Annihilation"?

Answer.--The Standard Dictionary, our best authority on such matters, gives the following definition of Annihilate:

(1) To put out of existence; destroy absolutely; reduce to nothing. (2) To destroy the identity of. Its synonym is, Exterminate, i.e., destroy entirely. Words are only vehicles for conveying thought, and much depends upon the vehicle which best expresses your meaning in the question. The spark of animal energy which God supplied to Adam and which he, in turn, dispensed to his offspring, but which was forfeited for him and for his posterity by his act of disobedience, passes at death from the individual as absolutely as it does from a brute beast. The word "life," however, as used in a large number of instances, does not stand merely for the spark of animal energy, but is a synonym for soul or being.

In God's purpose or arrangement this being has not in death become extinct, exterminated, annihilated; for he has provided for it a future. There is, however, no sentient being in the sense of consciousness, or knowledge, or appreciation of pain or of joy, or any other experience. But the Divine Creator, who first gave being, has declared that in the case of Adam and his children it is His purpose to provide a Redeemer, through whom all may be restored as completely as before they came under the death sentence.

The world, who do not recognize God or His power, and who have no knowledge of the promise of resurrection through the merit of Christ's redemptive work, might properly enough speak of one in death as being extinct, as a dead animal. This is the standpoint of the agnostic. But by believers, instructed of God respecting His purpose in Christ and in the resurrection of the dead eventually, and in the opportunity of eternal life to every one, this matter is to be viewed from the same standpoint from which our Lord viewed it when He said, "He is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live [or are alive] unto Him" (Luke 20:38); or as the Apostle Paul stated when he spoke of "God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were"

(Rom. 4:17); that is, God purposes their awakening, and speaks of the present condition of Adamic death as merely a suspension of life, and not as annihilation, extermination, extinction.

You probably have already in your library a little volume entitled THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES--fourth million now on the press. This will give you a much fuller answer to your question than our limited space will allow in this column.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO LIVE WITHOUT SIN?

Question.--When the Apostle wrote (I John 2:1), "These things I write unto you that ye sin not," was it his thought that it is possible for us to live without sin?

Answer.--In reading this text and many other Scriptures we need continually to keep in mind the fact that those who are accepted of God as His children, as members of the Body of Christ, begotten of the Holy Spirit, are all classed as New Creatures and not as men. The New Creature, therefore, in this text, would be the ye-- "that ye sin not," as though the Apostle said, "The object of my writing is that you might realize the responsibility of abstaining from sin and continuing in God's love." Then he informs us how this is to be accomplished. In this as in other respects he shows that the New Creature is responsible for the body. Anyone who would say that he was perfect and without flaw, would be deceiving himself. Nevertheless, these flaws are not of the New Creature, but chargeable to the flesh. If the New Creature should sin wilfully it would cease to be a New Creature, because the New Creature is begotten of the Spirit, has joined in the warfare against sin, and is facing in the very opposite direction from sin.

But if any man sin, let him not cast away his confidence in God, but let him remember that the Father, foreknowing that the New Creature could not control every thought and word and act of the flesh, has made provision for these, and has provided for us an Advocate, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Our Lord has already become our Advocate. He has appeared on our behalf-- appeared before the Father and made satisfaction for us. --Heb. 9:24.

Remembering this, if we find that through lack of faith, or weakness of the flesh, a step has been taken which is contrary to the Lord's will and our best spiritual interests, no time should be lost in retracing the step and in calling upon the Lord. We have an altar consecrated with the precious blood of Christ, far superior in every way to that altar which Abraham consecrated with the blood of typical animals, and the Apostle exhorts us, "Let us, therefore, come boldly [courageously --full of faith] unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need."--Heb. 4:16.

APPLIES TO THOSE NOT SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

Question.--"Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." (Isa. 24:6.) Who are these few men? And how were the others burned?

Answer.--In the great burning day the "heavens" will be on fire, and "the earth and the works therein shall be burned up." This time of trouble will involve the whole world, practically everybody. The Lord speaks of some who will be preserved in the midst of this trouble. Just as the three Hebrews were preserved in the fiery furnace, so we expect that some will be spared in the time of trouble.

"Seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3.) This invitation seems to be to others than the spirit-begotten. It would not apply to the Church, for her deliverance will be over before the culmination of the trouble. It would not apply to the "great company" class, for it is incidental to their deliverance that they shall suffer in this time of trouble the destruction of the flesh, and come up to honor out of "great tribulation." This, therefore, would seem to apply to a class of the world who are not spirit-begotten.

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PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS MESSENGERS

Question.--"For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared. He hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." (Isa. 30:33.) Who is the king for whom Tophet is prepared?

Answer.--Tophet was a name given to the Valley of Hinnom, which is symbolically a representation of the Second Death, and the Lord is intimating that He has plenty of fire and fuel to accomplish all this destruction and that the Spirit of the Lord will set it afire and cause it to burn to the complete destruction. The king for whom it is prepared is the Devil, with his messengers. He is the instigator of evil, whose destruction is already ordained. First, however, in the Divine providence, before he shall be destroyed, the glorious reign of Messiah is arranged for, during which all of mankind shall be brought to a full knowledge of the Truth, and to a full opportunity of coming into harmony with God, and of demonstrating whether they have the disposition of God or the disposition of the Adversary, Satan. When the choice of each shall have been fully determined, the Second Death shall swallow up all for whom it has been prepared. Such as demonstrate their sympathy with evil will be counted as the messengers of Satan, and will have a share with him in the Second Death.

NOTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT URIM AND THUMMIM

Question.--Is there any revelation as to what the Urim and Thummim consisted of, or how the priests were answered?

Answer.--There is nothing specific known on this subject. In some manner or other, it is supposed, the breastplate that was worn by the High Priest was used as the Urim and Thummim--that is, to give definite answer, Yes or No, to the questions that were propounded. For instance, if the question were asked, Shall Israel go out to war with this nation? or, Shall Israel enter into alliance with that nation? the Lord's answer was indicated by the breastplate. How these questions were answered, we are not informed. Nothing in the Scriptures tells us, and we have no tradition even that gives any very clear answer. We know that they had the Urim and Thummim and that the answer was indicated in some way with the precious stones of the breastplate, but just how, nobody knows.

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SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

WORK FOR THE BLIND

DEAR FRIENDS:--

Enclosed find report for the year's work in literature for the blind. Previous to March 1, 1911, the work of transcribing the SCRIPTURE STUDIES into type for the blind was in its inceptive stage and no systematic record was kept.

However, at this time, having secured financial aid from the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society and from others who had become interested in the work, it becomes expedient to adopt a business method.

Itemized, the work at present is as follows:

Books in circulation since March 1.....	103
Sold, complete copies, Vol. 1, in 7 parts.....	2
Sold, parts of Vol. 1.....	2
Books on hand.....	700
50 copies Vol. 1 in New York Point, in.....	7 parts
26 copies Vol. 1, English Braille.....	3 "
25 copies TABERNACLE SHADOWS.....	2 "
Balance in tracts, sermons, TOWER articles, etc.	
Copies sent to British office, Eng. Braille, Vol. 1...	9
Copies TABERNACLE SHADOWS.....	3
Copies to South Africa, Vol. 1 and TABERNACLE SHADOWS, each.....	1
Received.....	\$267.41

Expended for supplies, etc..... 91.49

Balance..... \$175.92

The labor has been the free-will offering of the Lord's people, confining expenses to the purchase of necessary supplies.

Sincerely yours in the Lord's service,
F. B. GOULD,
Librarian Gould Free Library for the Blind.

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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Christian greetings to you, our dearly beloved Pastor. It is with deep gratitude to our Heavenly Father that I am sending the enclosed post office order for one hundred dollars, to be used in the harvest work according to your best judgment. It is a cause for rejoicing that the dear Lord permits me to use some of His money in this way, which has been my heart's desire so long.

Present Truth has been a great blessing, and no less precious now; rather increasing as the years go by. The light grows clearer, and the foundation stronger, thus enduring the storms of trials and testings. Well it may, for its "Builder and Maker is God." It is with a spirit of thankfulness that I find myself in complete harmony with all the Lord's arrangements. Oh, wonderful wisdom! What confidence it inspires in the humble child of God!

The Passover Season was full of sacred memories, beautiful yet solemn, and not without contrition of heart in view of the many failures, when the sacrifice might have been more completely bound to the altar, when the Master's example might have been more faithfully followed. Favor upon favor has been my portion. How little is the sacrifice! And how rich is the reward! Surely, Infinite patience and love have been manifested by the Lord in dealing with His weak child. I trust it will not be in vain, but in the life to come will all redound to His honor and glory, His strength made perfect in weakness.

"Higher than the highest heaven,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord, Thy love at last has conquered--
None of self, and all of Thee."

THE TOWERS are so helpful. We were especially impressed with the articles in the last issue, "Pride in the Heart," "The Mortal Body the Servant of the New Mind," and "The Palace of Blessedness." While we are glad to hear the Lord's representatives on any subject pertaining to our Father's Word, nevertheless we listen with deeper interest to what will help us to build character and aid in making our "calling and election sure."

We appreciate your labor of love, dear Brother, better

than we can express, and pray that the Lord's blessing may ever attend your way, keeping you faithful unto death.

Your sister by His grace, -----III.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

I wish to tell you of my appreciation of the way the Lord has used you in giving out "meat in due season," helping us all to know the Lord's will more perfectly.

I have known something about this wonderful Truth for some years, and believed it to a certain extent, too, but just about a year ago I really started to study, and now I have consecrated, and am pressing down upon the "mark" for "the Prize" ahead. I wish to send in my name as one who has taken the Vow. I desire to have my name enrolled.

Yours in the dear Redeemer,
(Mrs.) EMMA SCOTT.--Ont., Can.

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:--

We feel that we cannot do less than write you to say that under God's guidance you have given us comfort that could come from no other source. Our son, a good and noble young man, but not a professor of religion, has been suddenly taken from us by death. I think our hearts would break if we believed, as we once did, that eternal torment awaited all but the righteous.

Thank God that through the light of "present Truth" we

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know without a doubt that he is hidden only until the wrath be overpast. We thank God and you for the blessed knowledge.

Yours in His name,
ANDREW R. and ANNIE S. MUSGRAVE.--Cape Breton.

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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Our three elders are doing good work, and we are all striving to grow in grace and knowledge and love. I pray constantly that daughter and I may be helps and not hindrances to the class. The hardest trial that has come to me during the years has been the spirit of disapproval among certain classes of Truth-people against any kind of prosperity--temporal or spiritual.

After all the talk we hear, I have often seen the poor treat the rich in a much meaner way than I have ever seen the rich treat the poor. It seems that many people hate everybody who has more of anything than they have. I simply cannot comprehend such a spirit, and surely the

Kingdom class cannot have any such spirit--regardless of professions along other lines!

Just as I desire the Master's patience when I am ignorant and out of the way, I pray for patience toward all. I already love these--sincerely--but our own children, whom we love dearly, sometimes try our patience. "Cast not away your confidence,...for ye have need of patience," is often in my mind, with the testimony that Enoch had, that he pleased God.

So long as this peace of pleasing God is mine I can endure the contradiction of sinners, remembering how the Lord "endured the cross, despising the shame." Ours is a wonderful hope--not a floating, but an anchored one.

Now, a question, please: Is it the part of wisdom for a Pilgrim to begin a public lecture by declaring that we do not believe in the divinity of Christ, the immortality of the soul, eternal torment and the Trinity, and not explain clearly what we do believe?

The impression gathered is that we do not believe in the prehuman existence of our Lord, future life for mankind, penalty for sin, nor the Holy Spirit!

The statement in January 15 TOWER satisfies me perfectly; but many did not seem to fully grasp it. The humanity of Jesus, the Deity of Christ; the personality of the Holy Spirit in Father and Son; immortality for Jesus and the Church--The Christ; everlasting life for many others, etc.--all this is a clear, comprehensible statement.

After a Pilgrim had made the first-mentioned declaration in an Illinois town recently, the men who had attended the meeting, on invitation of a merchant-brother, went to him next day and said, "You need never talk to us again, for we will not listen." I shall be so glad when the "pure language" is turned to the poor, bewildered people--for how can they understand the now often misstated facts? Some of the friends of the Truth have been its greatest enemies!

Once I heard a Pilgrim (now out of the Truth) say that all modern conveniences were of the Devil; all moral reforms were of the Devil, and all education was of the Devil--in fact, that everything but ignorance (and himself, perhaps) was of the Devil!

I thought he was a child of darkness, fit for the "Dark Ages," and I was relieved when he was no longer a Pilgrim, and not surprised when he was entirely out of the Truth and an opposer of the Truth.

I have heard testimonials in which friends "rejoiced" because ignorant "glorying in their shame"--because "not many wise are called"--apparently determined to remain as ignorant and unreasonable as possible--counting it a virtue! Surely we are "called" to be educated in the school of Christ!

Often I find it is not so much the Truth that people oppose as misapprehensions gathered from misstatements of the friends. The real Truth is beautiful and satisfying, and acceptable when understood.

Your Easter sermon was lucid enough to be easily understood by any of average intelligence. I rejoiced in this as I read it.

Yours in the Blessed Hope, -----.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Although it is so far back as the evening of April 4, 1910, since we registered before the Lord our Vow unto Him, I do not think you have been advised of this, and I therefore take this opportunity of informing you.

The peace and joy, light and blessing which we had before taking the Vow (which we look at as being a ratification in detail of our consecration vow), have remained with us; yea, have increased a hundredfold, and upon our table are being laid good things continually, "meat in due Season," from the hand of the Lord's Wise Steward, to whom we are indebted for so much comfort and consolation.

Believe me that you have a special interest in our prayers, and indeed in the prayers of all the brethren with whom we are at present privileged to meet. We ask an interest in your own prayers for the Church Universal, that we, with you, and with all saints, may be kept "faithful unto death," that we may receive "the Crown of Life" in God's due time.

Yours in the Glorious Hope,
SIDNEY AND HANNAH SMITH.--Eng.

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BEREAN QUESTIONS IN SCRIPTURE STUDIES

Series VI., Study IX.--The Judgment of the New Creation.

JULY 7

(26) Why do we need the Lord to direct our hearts into the love of God? P. 409, par. 3.

"I JUDGE NOT MINE OWN SELF, HE THAT JUDGETH ME IS THE LORD."

(27) Is it possible to judge ourselves unmercifully? If so, what Scriptures should we remember and apply? P. 410, par. 1, 2, 3.

(28) Is there danger of our going to the opposite extreme, and what is the cause for so doing, and what the remedy? P. 411, par. 1.

THE CHURCH SHOULD JUDGE SOME MATTERS.

(29) Cite some instances in which the Church should judge. P. 412, par. 1.

(30) Who only, as individuals, would have the authority to excommunicate an offending member? P. 412, par. 2, first half.

JULY 14

(31) What would be the effect of continuing to recognize the offender as a fellow-member of the New Creation? P. 413, top.

(32) Paraphrase the Apostle's advice to the Church as given in 1 Cor. 5. P. 413, par. 1.

(33) Should brethren in the Church go into worldly law courts to secure justice? P. 413, par. 2, 3, first half.

(34) What offenses would debar from the Kingdom, and therefore from fellowship in the Church? P. 414, top and par. 1.

JULY 21

"IF THY BROTHER TRESPASS AGAINST THEE."

(35) Outline the Divine arrangement for settling disputes and trespasses as between brethren. P. 414, par. 2 to P. 416.

(36) How is the decision of the Church to be accepted by all? And how are those who oppose such decision to be treated by fellow-members, and why? P. 416, par. 1.

(37) In the event of the offender's repentance, how should he be considered by the Church? P. 416, par. 2.

(38) Supposing the offender acknowledges his fault and makes amends to the best of his ability, what should be the attitude of the offended brother towards him, and should there be any limit to his forgiveness if the fault be repeated and apologized for time after time? P. 417, par. 1.

JULY 28

OFFENSES AGAINST THE CHURCH.

(39) In the case of offenses against the whole ecclesia, or the cause we represent, what course should be pursued? P. 417, par. 2 to P. 418, first eight lines.

(40) In a case of slander against the elders, or any of them, how should the Church proceed? P. 418, par. 1, 2.

"WE MUST ALL APPEAR BEFORE THE TRIBUNAL OF CHRIST."

(41) Explain 2 Cor. 5:10. P. 418, par. 3.

(42) Cite and explain other Scriptures which refer to the Church's judgment. P. 419, par. 1.

(43) What elements of Christian character will be most severely tested in the Church's judgment or trial? P. 419, par. 2.

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A.D. 1912--A.M. 6040

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PUBLISHED BY

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
CHARLES T. RUSSELL, PRESIDENT
"BROOKLYN TABERNACLE," 13-17 HICKS ST.,
BROOKLYN, N. Y., U. S. A.

Foreign Agencies:--British Branch: LONDON TABERNACLE,
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1912--GENERAL CONVENTIONS--1912

TORONTO, CANADA, JUNE 30-JULY 6, 7

All sessions to be held in the Horticultural Hall at the Canadian National Exhibition Park, West Toronto, June 30-July 6. The Park is easily accessible by Grand Trunk Railway and by King Street and other trolley car lines.

Railway Rates: Canadian railways give half fare rates for July 1 and the following day, possibly beginning June 30. American lines give low rates for a few days before and after July 4, available for friends in the border states. There are always special rates to Niagara Falls, which is only about two hours sail by steamer to Toronto, at a moderate price. There may be other excursion rates good for even ten days. Ask your local agent a week in advance.

If no rate as low as 1-1/2c. per mile each way is available, purchase a single ticket to Toronto, and have the agent fill out a certificate and bring it with you. This will entitle you to a return ticket at a greatly reduced rate--perhaps free.

Lodging can be secured through the Committee at from 50c. each per day (2 to a room) to \$1.50 per person; in some cases this will include breakfast. All expecting to attend should give prompt notice by addressing the Convention Committee, c/o W. G. Brown, Sec'y, 51 Tiverton Ave., Toronto, Canada. Give full name of each person and indicate which prefer to room together, and at what rate.

Brother Russell will deliver a public address in the Royal Alexandra Theatre, King St., West, at 3 p.m., July 7.

WASHINGTON, D.C., JULY 7-14

This Convention will be held in the suburbs of Washington City, D.C., at the Glen Echo Chautauqua Grounds, July 6-14. Arrangements for board and lodging will be made by our Committee on request at such prices as you may authorize from \$1.10 per day upward. No pains will be spared to make you comfortable as possible. All expecting to attend should notify us AT ONCE. Give full name of each person and indicate which prefer to room together, and at what rate.

The Committee of investigation say, "The location is ideal. The average Park temperature is ten degrees lower than that of Washington City. The Auditorium is still cooler by reason of its peculiar location and the fact that it is built over running water."

Washington City commands reasonable railway rates from

all quarters. The railroads have granted the I.B.S.A. a special rate of one and one-half fares for the round trip from points East of Pittsburgh, on sale July 5, 6 and 7, return limit July 18. A specially cheap excursion is on sale to New York City and return with stop-over privileges at Washington.

We are advised that the Pacific Coast friends are arranging for "Special Coach" service from San Francisco. The party will start from San Francisco via Southern Pacific, Train No. 4, at nine o'clock on the morning of July 2, and will go via Ogden, Cheyenne, Omaha, Chicago; leaving Chicago at 9:45 on the evening of July 5, arriving Washington early the second morning.

Friends in the territory of this route may find it advantageous to join this party and can get all the necessary information by addressing C. W. Gerdes, 2552 Hyde St., San Francisco. Your railroad agent will be glad to secure definite information as to time of train, route, rate, etc., and can do so by telegraphing at once the agent of the Southern Pacific at San Francisco.

GLASGOW AND LONDON CONVENTIONS

The Glasgow General Convention will be held in St. Mungo Halls, South York street, July 25-28. Arrangements have been made for several prominent Brethren to give addresses. The meetings will be continuous, except for intermissions

(Continued on Page 203.)

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GLASGOW AND LONDON CONVENTIONS

(Continued from Page 190.)

for rest and refreshment--opening at 9:30 a.m.

The Sunday meeting, specially arranged for the public, will be at St. Andrew's Grand Hall on Sunday, July 28, at 6:30 p.m., and will constitute the conclusion of the Convention. Brother Russell will be the speaker.

As the arrangements are being made in anticipation of considerable numbers of visitors from surrounding cities and country-side, all desirous of securing accommodations in advance will please address Brother G. MacKenzie, 28 Kilmailing road, Cathcart, Glasgow.

Arrangements will be made for the accommodation of any of the friends desiring to symbolize their consecration by water immersion. A large attendance is expected and all who trust in the precious blood of Jesus as the basis for their acceptance with the Father are cordially invited. Come asking a blessing and seeking to impart one by "showing forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light."

The London Convention this year will be held in the London Tabernacle, Lancaster Gate W., August 1-4. An interesting list of speakers has been arranged for and a cordial

invitation is extended to all who love the Lord in sincerity and truth and who are trusting in the merit of His blood and are fully consecrated to His service. Others who are seeking such a fellowship Divine are also invited.

Those desirous of accommodations will please address the Society, the London Tabernacle. An opportunity for symbolizing consecration unto death by water immersion will be afforded. Robes and everything else necessary will be provided.

A large attendance is confidently expected. It is to be hoped that all present will receive a heavenly benediction and be enabled to carry home with them refreshment to those not privileged to attend.

To those who cannot attend this convention we suggest a fellowship of spirit during the days of the convention--that their thoughts be with the convention and their prayers also; that thus bearing up the interests of the brethren at the throne of grace they may have a share also in the refreshments of these seasons.

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BETHEL HYMNS FOR JULY

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 July follow:--(1) 205; (2) 105; (3) 129; (4) 238; (5) 60; (6) 67; (7) 120; (8) 325; (9) 214; (10) 20; (11) 145; (12) 198; (13) 127; (14) 106; (15) 182; (16) 75; (17) 7; (18) 126; (19) 22; (20) 333; (21) 229; (22) 107; (23) 217; (24) 78; (25) 170; (26) 30; (27) 320; (28) 313; (29) 50; (30) 109; (31) Vow.

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HOW JESUS PREACHED TO SPIRITS IN PRISON

"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit, by which [two experiences--death and resurrection] He preached unto the spirits in prison."--1 Peter 3:18,19.

THIS TEXT has been made the basis for some peculiar presentations. From it some have deduced an intermediate state lasting between death and the resurrection. Others have claimed it as an authority for the doctrine of Purgatory. The difficulty in every case seems to be the failure to remember that the Bible always and everywhere teaches that the dead are really dead, that they know nothing, and that, therefore, it

would be impossible to do any preaching to the dead humans. Undoubtedly the theory that people are more alive after they die than when they were alive is responsible for nearly all of the foolish things which we have all at some time professed to believe.

Before dismissing the thought that these "spirits in prison" are human spirits, let us note the fact that to say, "human spirits," is an absurdity of itself, because human beings are not spirits and spirit beings are not humans. "Who maketh His angels spirits," is the Scriptural proposition. True, we do sometimes speak of humans as possessing a spirit of life, but by this we merely mean that they possess the power or energy of life, and the same would be equally true of the lower orders of creation, beasts, fish, fowl, etc.

Again, we sometimes speak of the Church as spirit beings--begotten of the Holy Spirit. Thus the Apostle speaks of the natural man in contrast with the New Creature, a spirit being. To appreciate this statement we must remember that the Church class receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit to the end that, if faithful, they may attain unto a spirit resurrection and become spirit beings, like unto the angels and like to the Redeemer. But we are not spirits yet, except by faith--by hope. However, the context shows the Apostle had no reference to the Church, either: we were not in prison; we received the message of salvation through the Apostles.

SPIRITS ONCE DISOBEDIENT

The spirits to whom the message was given had proven themselves disobedient, says St. Peter. He even tells us the time of their disobedience, namely, that it was "in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing." Surely, if noticing these particulars mentioned in the context, no one would be excusable for misunderstanding this Scripture and considering it in any way applicable to humanity of our day or to humanity in general. However, it is helpful to us to learn the full particulars of the matter. What was their disobedience, and when and how were they imprisoned?

Turning to Genesis 6:1-5, we find there the cause of the disobedience of those angels, who for a time had been permitted to see what they could do for the uplift of humanity, or, rather, permitted to demonstrate that the downward tendency of sin is incurable except in the manner which God has already arranged through Messiah and His glorious reign of a thousand years.

Instead of those angels helping mankind out of sin they helped themselves into sin, and by so doing they increased the depravity amongst humanity until the astounding record is that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually." The particular sin of those angels was that when they were granted the privilege of materializing--of taking human bodies for

the sake of helping and instructing mankind--they misused this power and took to themselves the daughters of men for wives.

Thus these angels came gradually to prefer to live as men amongst men and to rear earthly families rather than to abide in the condition in which they were created--spirit beings, higher than humans. Not only was this wrong in the sense that it was taking a course in opposition to the Divine arrangement, but it was wrong also because the thing was done for the cultivation and gratification of lust, and it led to their own moral defilement as well as having a baneful influence upon humanity; for we can readily see that for the angels, of superior powers and intelligence, to become leaders in lustful practices would mean a great influence upon mankind toward sin and defilement of mind and body.

We are particularly told that the offspring of this improper union between the angels and the daughters of men were giants, both physically and mentally superior to the fallen human family--"men of renown." And this statement, that they were "men of renown," was at a time when manhood's estate was reached at a hundred years, and implies that God did not interfere to hinder or stop the progress of sin for perhaps several centuries. In the meantime the race had become so corrupt that apparently only Noah and his family were uncontaminated --all others had more or less come under the influence,

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directly or indirectly, of these fallen angels or their giant sons. Hence, of Noah it was written (not that he was a perfect man, but), "Now Noah was perfect in his generation" (uncontaminated) and his family apparently the same. Hence these alone were saved in the ark, while all the remainder, more or less contaminated, were destroyed by the flood.

"IN CHAINS OF DARKNESS"

It was then and there that God imprisoned those spirits, angels, who kept not their first estate, and are therefore called fallen angels, devils, demons. They were not imprisoned in some far-off world called hell, nor are they engaged there in stoking fires for the torture of poor humanity. Following the leading of the Scriptures we find that when the flood came they were not destroyed because, while their fleshly bodies which they assumed might indeed perish, yet they would merely dematerialize, or assume their spirit conditions again.

The record is that God cast them down, that He condemned them to an overthrow--that they might not any longer associate with the holy angels, but must be reserved in tartarus--our earth's atmosphere. Here they were imprisoned, not in a special place, but in the sense of having their liberties restrained, "in chains of darkness."

They were no longer permitted to materialize and thus to associate with humanity. These things are distinctly told us by St. Jude and St. Peter (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4,5) --an explanation in full harmony with the Genesis account of their fall.

ONCE DISOBEDIENT--STILL DISOBEDIENT

We, of course, cannot know that all of those fallen angels are still in a disloyal condition of heart. On the contrary, in harmony with our text, we may suppose that some of these fallen angels have since repented of their wrong course and it would be none too strong a way to state the matter--that any such repentant ones would surely have terrible experiences as a result. To be obliged to be in close touch and relationship with the more evil and malignant ones and to have knowledge of all their evil designs and efforts would be a terrible experience and, besides this, we may be sure that the rebellious would not hesitate to persecute the repentant ones in every conceivable manner, as they would be lawless, regardless of the Divine will.

On the other hand, the repentant ones would be obliged to restrain themselves and to not render evil for evil, knowing that this would be contrary to the Divine will. In other words, repentant ones amongst those fallen spirits, influenced by the preaching of Jesus or otherwise, would have a kind of purgatorial experience, and the very thought calls forth our sympathy.

When imprisoned or cut off from the privilege of materialization, many of the fallen spirits, we know not what proportion, continued their active opposition to God, after the manner of Satan. Hence they are spoken of as his angels, his messengers, his servants and he is spoken of as Beelzebub, the Prince of Demons. Satan, who sinned much earlier than the others, and in a different way, the Scriptures tell us was an angel of a higher rank, or a higher nature, and this superiority of his has made him the Prince or ruler over the hosts of fallen spirits.

FIGHTING AGAINST GOD

The fight of Satan and his fallen angels is against God, against all who are in harmony with Him, against all the regulations of righteousness, and against all the channels and servants whom the Lord may use. St. Paul's words along this line are forceful; he remarks that God's people contend not merely "with flesh and blood," but also "with wicked spirits in high positions," and the question arises, "Who is sufficient for these things?" The reply is that none is sufficient; without the aid of the Redeemer His church would be quite overcome and vanquished by evil.

Likewise, without the Redeemer's aid through His Kingdom, without the binding of Satan, without our

Lord's releasing of the world from the bondage of sin and death, there would be no hope of the world's recovery from its present bondage. But with the Apostle we exclaim, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"-- Romans 8:31.

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THROUGH MEDIUMS AND OBSESSIONS

Satan's original plan of attack was to bring our race under his influence by misrepresentation--by putting darkness for light and light for darkness--for instance, the temptation under which Mother Eve fell. Satan there represented himself as Eve's friend, giving her sound advice. He represented God as having a selfish motive behind His command that our first parents should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Satan declared that God had told an untruth when He said that the penalty for sin would be death. Satan declared that man cannot die.

And has he not since kept up the same line of falsification? And has he not deceived the whole world upon this very subject? Do not all peoples in every land believe that when a man dies he does not die, but gets more alive --exactly Satan's lie of the first instance? How few have believed God, even amongst His people who truly love Him, and who truly desire to believe the teachings of His Word! We have all been under a kind of "hoodoo." "The god of this world [Satan] has blinded" our minds on this subject. We are now coming to see that death is the penalty for sin and that the resurrection is the salvation which God has promised and will provide.

Satan has had powerful allies and servants in the fallen angels, and it is through their persistence that his lie has seemingly triumphed over the Divine Word--"Dying, thou shalt die." These fallen spirits have made various manifestations in every land for centuries, and thereby have apparently substantiated the theory that a dead man is more alive than when he was alive. Knowing that mankind would have nothing to do with them if their real personality were known they hide their personality and represent themselves as our dead friends who desire to speak with us, either directly or through mediums.

A further desire of these angels is to obsess or to get possession of a human being. Being chained or restrained from the privilege of materialization, the next most desirable thing in their estimation is to gain control over a human being and to use his body instead of their own. This is styled obsession, and persons so afflicted today are sent to an insane asylum where, it is estimated, they constitute at least one half of the entire number. In the days of our Lord these were not mistakenly supposed to be insane, but rightly declared to be obsessed. All remember the New Testament account that our Savior and His Apostles cast out legions of fallen spirits from humanity.

"KNOW YE NOT THAT THE SAINTS SHALL JUDGE ANGELS?"

We need not discuss this question with Bible Students, for it is too well recognized to be disputed. We suggest a topical study of this subject by all of our readers. See

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how many times Jesus and the Apostles cast out demons, and note the particulars. Although we still have with us spirit mediums and many obsessed, we cannot know whether the proportionate number is greater or less than in our Lord's day. Since the world's population today is so much larger, the same number of evil spirits (which do not increase) would show proportionately less.

But, however that may be, we may assume that some fruitage resulted from the great sermons preached to these in connection with the death and resurrection of our Lord, respecting which St. Peter tells us in our text. Additionally, St. Paul remarks, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels?" (I Corinthians 6:3.) We do know that the holy angels need no judging, no trial, hence the Apostle must in some way refer to a trial or judgment or testing of these spirits in prison who were once disobedient, in the days of Noah. And if the judgment or testing is a part of the Divine plan, it implies a hope for them, and in conjunction with St. Peter's statement in our text it gives the reasonable inference that the preaching which Jesus did to them was not wholly in vain.

HOW JESUS PREACHED IN DEATH

Here arises another question: If Jesus was really dead, as the Scriptures declare, if "He poured out His soul unto death," and "made His soul an offering for sin," and His soul was not raised from the dead until the third day after His crucifixion, how could He in the meantime preach to spirits in prison, or to anybody else? We reply that He could preach in the same way that the Apostle refers to in respect to Abel, saying, "He, being dead, yet speaketh" (Hebrews 11:4); and again, in the same way that the blood of Abel is said to have cried to God--figuratively. Of one thing we are sure, namely, that Jesus gave no oral address while He was dead. He preached in the way we sometimes refer to when we say, "Actions speak louder than words."

It was the great object lesson which the fallen angels saw that constituted to them the great sermon that gave them a ground for hope. On several occasions the fallen spirits, when commanded to come out of human beings, declared that they knew Jesus. In the long ago they had known Him, when, as the Only Begotten of the Father and His Representative, He had created them and all things that are made, and was also the mouthpiece for all

Divine orders and regulations.

The fallen angels realized that He had come into the world to be its Redeemer; they perceived the great stoop that He had made from His lofty position on the heavenly plane to the servant position on the human plane. They admired His loyalty and faithfulness to God, but doubtless believed Him to be foolish; they never expected Him to arise from the dead. But when they perceived His resurrection on the third day to glory, honor and immortality, "far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named," His sermon to them was complete, namely, that "the wages of sin is death," but that "the gift of God is eternal life." (Romans 6:23.) And as they realized thus the Power of God and the Love of God for His human creatures, the Apostle's words imply that this constituted to them a message of hope. Perhaps if they would show full contrition God eventually would have mercy upon them, even as He had had mercy and had provided for humanity.

The lesson is one for all. God's power is Infinite, so is His love, His mercy, His goodness. Nevertheless, every wilful sin will have its punishment, a just recompense of reward, and only the willing and obedient shall have the Divine favor and everlasting life. Let each apply the lesson to himself.

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"THIS ONE THING I DO"

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."--1 Cor. 2:2.

THE TALENTED APOSTLE PAUL gives in another place his testimony as to the wisdom of shaking off some of our plans and arrangements and of relaxing our efforts in various directions in order to concentrate our energies upon those things which we can best bring to perfection, saying, "This one thing I do." (Phil. 3:13.) The Apostle's one business in life was to be, so far as he was able, acceptable to the Lord, personally, and to do with his might what he could to assist others into the same condition.

In harmony with this, the thought of our text seems to be that whatever the Apostle knew respecting other matters prominent in his day--customs of the Age, scientific questions, etc.--he would ignore. He would be a specialist. He would confine his thoughts, words and teachings along this one line; for he thought it was worthy. He had been at Corinth as an ambassador of Christ. He was not there to air his knowledge, but to tell the message of the Kingdom. He would make preaching

the Gospel his one business, to accomplish which he felt that all of his knowledge and energy were too little.

The Apostle did not determine to ignore all of his knowledge without having a good reason, or purpose therefor. It was because he wished to concentrate all of his attention and influence upon one great subject. That subject was Jesus Christ, Jesus the Anointed; Jesus the Messiah was the main thought of all his preaching. He realized that the great Messiah was a part of the Divine Program which had been promised--the "Seed" which was to bless all the families of the earth; that Jesus was that great Messiah, and that all men should recognize Him, should flock to His standard.

But St. Paul would preach, not only that Jesus was the Messiah, but that He was the crucified Messiah, for he would not be ashamed of the Divine teaching. He would preach that God sent forth His Son; and that the Son had left the glory He had with the Father, had lived on the earth, and had "died, the Just for the unjust," for this very purpose--that He might manifest His obedience to the Divine arrangement. In thus preaching Christ and His crucifixion, the Apostle was not ignoring the fact that there was to be a Church; Jesus was the Anointed Head over His Body, the Church. Hence, in preaching Jesus the Anointed One, St. Paul was showing how the Divine Plan was being outworked under Divine supervision, and what the glorious results would be. To these things he had determined that all his time and attention should go.

How evident it is that today many ministers have lost something possessed by the Apostle, who thus recognized the importance of the Gospel of Christ! This loss very largely accounts for the various peculiar topics advertised for religious meetings; sometimes the topic is politics; sometimes temperance; sometimes woman-suffrage. The reason for this change from the old-time style of preaching is that during the Dark Ages the Gospel became perverted, misrepresented; and that now people are ashamed of what was formerly preached--"Be good and go to

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heaven; be bad and go to hell!" It is not a great message. We cannot wonder that an astute mind grasps the whole thing in a few minutes. We are rather glad, indeed, that ministers are ashamed to preach what their creeds profess, and that, therefore, their creeds must be kept in the background.

"NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST"

For us, however, who see the importance of the Gospel, the case is different. We know that this Gospel of the Kingdom, of which the Apostle was not ashamed, teaches that the elect Church is to be the Bride of Christ; that Messiah is to bless the whole world; that

Jesus is the Messiah; that He was crucified, dead, buried, raised from the dead by His Father; that His crucifixion was a part of the great Divine Plan, and that without this very arrangement no salvation could be effected, either for the Church, or for the world in the future. Therefore, as the Apostle did, we are preaching Jesus, the Crucified One, who died for our sins, who rose again for our justification, and who, coming in glory with His Church, is the great Messiah, to bless the world through natural Israel.

Because we have found the Truth we, like St. Paul, feel constrained to preach nothing but this Message. The same truth that influenced Him should influence us. If, therefore, any of the brethren feel disposed to go out after the manner of Babylon and preach something else, here is the reproof--"Not...anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." This is the only subject. St. Paul would be as though he knew nothing else. This subject would be the one thing to which he would give his time and attention. Let it be so with us!

Beloved, as you value the glorious hope set before you, we beseech you that you give no heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, as the Apostle terms them (I Tim. 4:1); but that with fixedness of purpose you apply yourselves to the one thing to which you are called, and which as prospective heirs of Messiah's Kingdom you are privileged to do. Let us not forget that we are a "peculiar people," separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions, and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God, having been called out of our former darkness into His marvelous light. Thus separate from the world and from Christians who partake largely of the spirit of the world, what wonder if we find them all out of harmony with us, and either ignoring or opposing us!

We expect such opposition; and we know that it will continue until our course has been finished in death. If we endure hardness as good soldiers for the Truth's sake, no matter how that hardness may come, in our efforts to do the Lord's will and to advance the interests of His Kingdom, then we are presenting our bodies as living sacrifices in the Divine service. To be really in His service includes both the careful and continual study of God's Plan, and the imbibing of its spirit, leading to an enthusiastic zeal for its accomplishment, and to activity to the extent of ability in its service, whatever the cost or sacrifice it may require.

If faithful in this service we have neither time nor disposition to give heed to other themes having no bearing on the one thing to which we have solemnly dedicated our lives. If we have consecrated all to God our time is not our own; and consequently we have none to spare for the investigation of theories built upon any other foundation than that laid down in the Bible. Nor have we time to devote to the ideas and pursuits which engross the world's attention, many of which are harmless or even

elevating in themselves, but which would be harmful and degrading to us if we allow them to occupy consecrated time and to divert our attention from the one thing we ought to be doing.

The Apostle warns us to "Shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness"; but counsels, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth"; "Teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith."--2 Tim. 2:16,15; I Tim. 1:3,4.

HOW NARROW THIS WAY!

Is not this a very narrow way? Yes, so narrow that our Lord foretold respecting it, "Strait [difficult] is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto [the] life, and few there be that find it!" (Matt. 7:14.) It is so narrow that it is wide enough to admit only the Lord's Plan and those who are willing to discard all other plans, projects and questionings, and to devote themselves fully to its service; and who are quite willing to bear any reproach it may bring.

Are you endeavoring from day to day to vindicate the Divine character and to make known God's righteous ways? Are you diligently studying to make yourself thoroughly familiar with the Truth, so that you may indeed be a living epistle known and read of all men within the circle of your influence? Are you indeed a workman that need not be ashamed (2 Tim. 2:15)? Are you of those who have really given themselves to the Lord, saying truthfully to Him:

"Take myself--I will to be
Ever, only, all for Thee"?

If so, you are just narrow minded enough to say, "This one thing I do; and I make everything else bend to this one thing of showing forth God's praises and of helping others into His marvelous light; and to this end I cultivate and use what talents I possess as a wise steward of my Heavenly Father."

Dearly beloved, we impose neither vows nor bondage upon each other, but the call has its own limitations; the Master has directed us to teach all nations (for the Gospel is no longer confined to the Jewish nation), not astronomy nor geology nor any of the vain philosophies about which the world speculate, but--"Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."--Matt. 28:20.

This is what the Apostle Paul did. Hear him in his zeal for this one thing to which he had devoted his life: "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with the excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the mystery of God; for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. [I riveted your attention on this one thing! I kept this one thing continually before you.]...

And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power [of the Truth], that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."--I Cor. 2:1-5.

St. Paul was an outspoken, uncompromising teacher. When he knew that he had the Truth, he spoke it with confidence, and boldly declared that everything contrary to it is false doctrine. He also taught believers that it was not only their privilege, but their duty to be established in the faith, to know on the evidence of God's Word, why they believed, and to be able to give to every man that inquired a reason for the hope that was in them.

Let it be so with us also. Each consecrated believer

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should ask himself, "How carefully have I studied that which I recognize as Divine Truth? How fully capable am I of handling the Sword of the Spirit?" Few indeed are those who can say they have fully digested and assimilated all they have received; and that they have let none of these things slip from memory; that they have so treasured it up in their hearts that it is their meditation by day and by night; that they have a ready answer--a "Thus saith the Lord"--for every man that asks them a reason for the hope that is in them, concerning any point of doctrine; that they can clearly and intelligently portray the Divine Plan, quote the Divine authority for each successive step of it, and, if need be, point out its place in the Divine system of types. To gain such proficiency in the Word is the work of a lifetime; but every day should see a closer approximation to that proficiency, and will if we are faithful students and faithful servants of the Truth.

If all the consecrated were thus busily engaged in putting on the armor of God, and in proving it by actual use in zealous endeavor to herald the Truth and to help others to stand, there would be no time left for even good temperance reform work, nor for work among the slums of the great cities, nor for the doctrine of healing, nor any such things. We have no consecrated time for these matters, which are only side issues and not harmful in themselves, except as they divert attention and consume time which has been consecrated to another and higher use. All these works will be effectually accomplished in the "Times of Restitution" (Acts 3:19-22), now in the near future. Besides, there are others engaged in these works; we recognize and seek to accomplish the work set before us in the Divine Plan.

In all the history of the Church there has never been a time in which the great Adversary has been so active in diverting attention from the Truth by introducing unprofitable and irrelevant questions as at present. Just now, when the exaltation and glory of the Church are soon to

be accomplished, and when the faithful are about to be received into the joy of their Lord, Satan is resorting to every device in order to beguile them of their reward and to frustrate this feature of the Divine Plan.

But really to frustrate any part of the Divine Plan is impossible. God has purposed to take out from among men a "little flock," "a people for His name"; and such a company is assuredly being gathered. Yet whether all those now in the race for the prize will surely be of that company, is still an open question. Take heed, beloved, that no man take thy crown. (Rev. 3:11.) If any come short of their privileges and prove unworthy of the rich

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inheritance, there are others who will quickly fill their places.

Our observation of those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than this "Gospel of the Kingdom" to engross time and attention, leads us to advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the Gospel, leaving all subjects outside of this, however interesting they may be, to those who prefer to devote time to them now; and to the future life for ourselves, when all knowledge shall be ours. We have invariably observed that those who, for any avoidable cause, have turned aside from the true and only Gospel, are quickly turned out of the way or greatly hindered in their course toward the "prize" of our "high calling."

May we, dear brethren, be able truthfully to express our position in the words of the Apostle: "This one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"; "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."--Phil. 3:13,14; I Cor. 2:2.

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CHRIST MADE A CURSE FOR ISRAEL

IT HAS ESCAPED the attention of many Bible Students that, while the Israelites had many advantages every way under their Law Covenant (Rom. 3:1,2), yet each one who failed to meet all the requirements of that Law Covenant came under a curse, or sentence, not upon individuals of other nations. Thus it is written, "Cursed is every one [every Israelite] that continueth not in all the words of the Law [Covenant] to do them."--Gal. 3:10.

The Apostle shows that this curse was upon only

those who were under that Covenant, saying, "What things soever the Law [Covenant] saith, it saith unto them who are under the Law [Covenant.]" (Rom. 3:19.) Moses also made the same statement--"The Lord our God made a Covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this Covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us who are all of us here alive this day." (Deut. 5:2,3.) Indeed, no other arrangement would have been just, for the blessings of that Covenant and its promises of life were to the one nation. (Rom. 9:4.) How, then, could its curse extend beyond the nation which enjoyed its favors and privileges?

The blessings of that Law Covenant were earthly, and so also were its curses; with one exception, noted further along, neither blessings nor curses related to the everlasting future. The future had already been determined for them and for all the race of Adam, in the death sentence pronounced in Eden. Nothing short of the ransom price--the corresponding price--which our Lord gave long afterwards, could set aside that original sentence, and secure for mankind a complete release from the sentence of death. The sin-offerings of Israel's Day of Atonement were not of permanent value, but only for a year in advance, and were, therefore, repeated yearly.

THE LAW COVENANT GUARANTEED LIFE TO ONLY ONE MAN

The blessings and curses of the Law Covenant were very particularly explained to Israel. (See Deut. 28, entire chapter.) This Covenant included every member of the nation of Israel, so that they shared in common the blessings or the curses. There was one provision, however, for an individual, namely, that the man who would fully obey all the requirements of the Law should live--be guaranteed lasting life. (Lev. 18:5.) Even if Israel may have imagined it possible for all or for many of the nation to thus gain life everlasting, we can see that God never had any such expectation concerning them. He knew from the beginning what He has taught us by experience, as well as by the inspired words of the Apostles, that "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh [i.e., none of the fallen race, needing justification] be justified in God's sight."--Rom. 3:20.

The Man Christ Jesus, who obeyed the Law absolutely, was the One in the Divine purpose for whom the provision was made, that "He that doeth these things shall live."

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Consequently, He had a right to life everlasting, and therefore might have asked for more than twelve legions of angels to defend Him from those who sought His life. Had He done so, He would have received them. (Matt. 26:53.) But He laid down His life. The one death, begun at Jordan and "finished" three and a half years

later at Calvary, accomplished two things: one for Israel only, the other for the whole world.

Since the children of Israel, as well as the other nations, were Adam's posterity, they in common with others shared his sentence of death, and were redeemed by our Lord's offering of Himself a sin-offering and corresponding price for Adam and those who lost life in Adam. (Rom. 5:12,18.) But since Israel alone, and no other nation or family or people of earth, had been brought under the terms of the Law Covenant made with them at Mt. Sinai, therefore only Israelites needed to be "redeemed from the curse of the Law [Covenant]."--Gal. 3:13.

That the one Man, Christ Jesus, could justly redeem our race is stated by the Apostle, and is clearly evident when we see that all men were sentenced in the one man Adam; but how could one man redeem the multitudinous nation of Israel from the curse of their Law Covenant?

MOSES THE TYPICAL FATHER OF ISRAEL

We answer that in connection with Israel's Covenant there is a point that few have noticed. It is that God dealt with only one man in connection with the making of that Law Covenant; and that man was Moses, who stood in the position of a father to the whole nation, the nation being regarded and treated as children under age.

See Moses' own words regarding the matter: "And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast Thou afflicted Thy servant? And wherefore have I not found favor in Thy sight that Thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? Have I begotten them, that Thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father bearing the sucking child, unto the land which Thou swearest unto their fathers? Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh that we may eat. I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if Thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray Thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in Thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness."--Num. 11:11-15.

The Lord talked with Moses in the Mount. The Lord gave the tables of the Law to Moses. And Moses spoke to the people, gave them the Law and bound them by the terms of the Law Covenant.

"Moses alone shall come near the Lord."--Exod. 24:2.

"As the Lord spoke unto Moses, so did the children of Israel."--Num. 5:4.

"The people cried unto Moses; and Moses prayed unto the Lord."--Num. 11:2.

God "sent Moses His servant."--Psa. 105:26.

"They envied Moses also in the camp."--Psa. 106:16.

"He [God] said that He would destroy them, had not Moses, His chosen, stood before Him in the breach."--Psa. 106:23.

"Remember ye the Law of Moses My servant."--
Mal. 4:4.
"Moses...hath in every city them that preach him."
--Acts 15:21.
"Did not Moses give you the Law?"--John 7:19.
"What did Moses command you?"--Mark 10:3.
"One accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust."--
John 5:45.

All Israel were "baptized unto [into] Moses, in the
cloud and in the sea."--I Cor. 10:2.
"He that despised Moses' Law died without mercy."--
Heb. 10:28.

"The Law was given by Moses, but grace and Truth
came by Jesus Christ."--John 1:17.
So thoroughly was the one man Moses the representative
and typical father of the nation of Israel that God
could and did propose its destruction and the fulfilment
of all His engagements with Moses' family instead.
(Exod. 32:10,31,32.) It was thus, as God's representative
on the one hand, and as Israel's representative on
the other, that Moses could be and was the mediator of
the Law Covenant between God and that nation.

CHRIST THE "EVERLASTING FATHER"

When the Man Christ Jesus, by full obedience to the
Law Covenant, became entitled to life everlasting under
its provisions, He had attained the right to "Moses' seat,"
the right to supersede Moses as the Lawgiver and representative
of the nation. Of Him Moses bore witness
saying, "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto
you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in
all things."--Acts 3:22; Deut. 18:18,19.

By fulfilling the requirements of the Law Covenant
and by His obedience even unto death, Christ became the
heir of its promise of life, and the prospective Mediator
of the prospective New Covenant, based upon that better
and everlasting sacrifice for sins, which, therefore, needed
not to be repeated yearly, and was effective, not for
Israel only, but for all the families of the earth, for "this
Man," "the Man Christ Jesus, gave Himself a Ransom
for all." (I Tim. 2:6.) Hence this Gospel of the New
Covenant was for the Jew first and also for the Greek
(or Gentile). Thus the one sacrifice, finished at Calvary,
did not only a special work for Israel, but also a general
work of redemption for the world, including Israel, which
suretied the New Covenant and in due time will make it

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operative for all mankind.

Thus seen, the expression, "Christ is the end [fulfilment]
of the Law [Covenant] for righteousness [justification]
to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4), can
apply only to Jews who have by faith accepted Christ. It
cannot apply to others--either to those who never were

Jews and who consequently were never under that Covenant, or to those who still trust in Moses' Covenant and who are still vainly seeking life by obedience to its provisions, law, etc.

ISRAEL NOW UNDER THE CURSES OF THE LAW

It is a common mistake to suppose the Scriptures to teach that the Law Covenant died, or was destroyed by our Lord. It became dead in the sense that its proffer of life ceased when our Lord Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law Covenant, and inherited all of its blessings and life-rights; but it lives in the sense that its blessings and curses still cling to Israel, as so many assets and liabilities. Hence all the children of Jacob are still bound by this Law Covenant, unless they have died to it.

Only those who realize that they cannot gain everlasting life through their union with Moses (the Law Covenant) are ready to abandon all hope of saving their life by that union with Moses and to become dead to all such expectations, and to accept the death of Christ, the Ransom price for Adam and all his race, as the basis of a new hope of a new life. Hence, only those Israelites who by faith reckoned themselves as hopelessly dead under the Law Covenant, and as risen with Christ to a new life secured by His sacrifice, and who in will are

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dead to sin--only such could be united to Christ as members of the "Seed" of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Thus, according to the Apostle's reasoning, the idea of so blending the two Covenants that Christians are united to both Moses and Christ, is wholly out of the question. Gentiles, who never were under the Law Covenant, could not, of course, be released from it; and in order for a Jew to be released from that Covenant he must by faith recognize that Jesus Christ fulfilled the terms of the Law Covenant, and then must consecrate his flesh to death with Christ as reckonedly a member of Christ's flesh, that so doing he might be reckoned as a "New Creature," united to the Lord as a member of His spiritual Body.

The text, "Christ is the end [or fulfilment] of the Law [Covenant] for righteousness to every one [under it] that believeth" (Rom. 10:4), does not conflict with the above; for only believers are specified. Eph. 2:15, "Having abolished in His flesh the enmity of the Law of commandments contained in ordinances," and Col. 2:14, refer to Jewish believers, for whom the handwriting of ordinances is blotted out, while Col. 2:20 refers to the Gentile converts who must become dead to the "rudiments of the world," before entering upon the Covenant of sacrifice, even as the Jews must become dead to the rudiments of their Law Covenant.

ISRAEL'S PRESENT EXPERIENCE A PART OF THEIR COVENANT

That the Law Covenant with Israel is still binding upon that nation is further evident from the fact that upon their national rejection of Christ they were nationally blinded until the end of the Gospel Age (Rom. 11:7,25), and that God declares that He has not cast away His people of that Covenant, but that under the New Covenant He will open their eyes to see Christ as the only Door of hope, that of a new life purchased with His own blood.--Rom. 11:27,29; compare Deut. 30:1-9.

Meanwhile, we have the evidence that their Covenant continues in force in the fact that, as a nation, they have for centuries been receiving the very "curses" specified under their Covenant. (See Deut. 28:15-67.) Verses 49-53 describe the Roman siege, etc.; verses 64-67 describe the condition of Israel since. As shown in previous writings the Lord (Lev. 26:18-45) declared the symbolical "seven times," 2,520 years, of Israel's subjection to the Gentiles, and their deliverance--A.D. 1914. Thus their present experience was foretold as a part of their Covenant.

Israel as a nation is still bound by that Covenant which they at first supposed would bring life, but which experience proved could bring them only death, because of the weakness of their flesh and their inability to fulfil its requirements expressed in its Law of Ten Commandments. There is only one door of escape from it, viz., Christ, and the New [Law] Covenant which is soon to be made with Israel. God shut them up to this one and only hope (Gal. 3:23), and He promises that by and by, when the Gospel Church, the Body of Christ, has been selected, He will open their blind eyes and cause them to see Christ in His true character--as their Redeemer from sin and their Deliverer from death and their Covenant of death.--Rom. 11:25-29.

CHRIST MADE A CURSE FOR ISRAEL ONLY

As to the significance of the statement, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13), the Apostle in this text is speaking, not to Christians in general, but to those Christians who had passed from Moses into Christ--out of the Law Covenant into the Covenant of sacrifice with Christ, as members of His Body. It would not be true to say that Christ redeemed us Gentiles from the curse of the Law, for we were never under the Law. Those, therefore, who were under the curse of the Law were Jews. The Apostle classifies himself with Israel, some of whom were in Galatia, some in Palestine, etc. "Christ hath been made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

The particular sense in which Christ redeemed the

Jews was as a nation and not as individuals. The whole nation was involved in the contract made at Sinai. Consequently, in order to meet all the requirements of the people as a whole, the One who would redeem Israel from the baneful effects of the Law Covenant must suffer the extreme penalty imposed by that Covenant. Therefore to redeem Israel from that condemnation our Lord had to be crucified.

As for the remainder of mankind, they suffer from the sentence of death that came upon Adam, but no particular form of death was implied. The Jews alone needed this particular form of death for their release. The whole nation was under this Law Covenant because the contract was made with them as a nation and through one mediator, Moses. Our Lord will redeem the whole nation from their failure to keep that Law, from the condemnation of that Law, by instituting the New Covenant, by taking over into the New Covenant all those who were under the old Law Covenant.

That New Covenant will go into operation in due time. Christ has already redeemed the Jews and all mankind in the sense that He has laid down the Ransom price; but He has not yet redeemed them in the sense of recovering them nor even in the sense of applying that price. At the end of this Age He will apply the price for Israel and the world; and then the New Covenant arrangements will go into effect for the blessing of all who come under its regulations.

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BEYOND THE VEIL

These stammering lips, that now
So vainly strive to speak Thy praise--
 Beyond the veil
Shall make the heaven of heavens resound
 Through endless days.

These yearning eyes, that strain
To catch by faith a glimpse of Thee--
 Beyond the veil
Shall see Thee as Thou art through all
 Eternity.

These trembling hands, these feet,
That seek to serve so earnestly--
 Beyond the veil
Shall for Thy Kingdom's glorious work
 Empowered be.

And this poor, throbbing heart,
That cannot now unfold its love--
 Beyond the veil

Shall bloom and shower its fragrance through
The heaven above.

My soul, that neither seeks
Nor findeth here its perfect rest--
Beyond the veil
Shall in Thy likeness wake and be
Forever blest!

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

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EMBRYO KINGDOM PARABLES

--MARK 4:26-32; MATTHEW 13:33--JULY 21.--

Text: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on
earth as it is done in heaven."--Matt. 6:10.

MANY OF US in the past have overlooked the
fact that nearly all of the teachings of the
Redeemer appertain to the Kingdom--His
Messianic Kingdom. Some of us indeed had
gotten the unscriptural thought that Messiah's
Kingdom would consist merely of a
sovereignty in the hearts of His followers
and in the present life.

Now we see the real import and connection
of the Great Teacher's numerous utterances
on this subject. As He taught us to pray, "Thy
Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, even as it is
done in heaven," He meant that we should have in mind
God's glorious promise that eventually, through Messiah's
Kingdom, ignorance, sin and death will all be overthrown,
and the willing and obedient of mankind will be released
from these until "every knee shall bow and every tongue
confess" to the glory of God.

Our Lord meant that we should connect this Kingdom
with the great promise made to Abraham, "In thy Seed
shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The Master's
teachings and the Message which He commissioned
us to give in His name is the Gospel of the Kingdom--
the Message of coming glory, and the Message that now
God is selecting a "little flock" to be the spiritual Seed of
Abraham, joint-heirs with Jesus in the Throne of that
Kingdom. Paul refers to this in Galatians 3:29: "And if
ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs
according to the promise."

Today's study sets before us a number of Jesus'
parables respecting the Kingdom. The majority of these
refer to the Kingdom class of the present time rather
than to the Kingdom in its fully developed state during
the thousand years of His glory. All of God's consecrated
people, begotten of the Holy Spirit during this Age--since

Pentecost--constitute together the Kingdom class, the Kingdom in embryo--unfinished, undeveloped, incomplete. Some of these embryo members of the Kingdom may yet fail to make their calling and election sure, and they may become "castaways" as respects the glory and honor to which they have been called.

THE KINGDOM DEVELOPMENT SLOW

The first illustration of our lesson is that God's Kingdom in its present embryotic condition is of slow, gradual, methodical development, covering the entire period of this Gospel Age. It is like seed cast into the ground, which brings its maturity after many days and varied experiences --when it is finally harvested. Jesus and the Apostles did the seed sowing, not only for their own day but for the whole wheat class developed throughout this Age. And as Jesus explained in another parable, "The Harvest is the end of the Age." The gathering for the heavenly garner will be accomplished by the First Resurrection.

LIKE A MUSTARD SEED

The different parables do not view the embryo Kingdom from the same standpoint. It is because it may be viewed from such a variety of angles that so many parables are given us. Just so we might take various photographs of a building. One might show the eastern side, another the western, another the front elevation, another the floor-plan, and another show it with its scaffolding. Or, if a concrete building, the frame work might be pictured, inside of which the concrete is cast.

The parable of the mustard seed appears to represent the Kingdom from the viewpoint of the world--as the nominal church, developed from the original little seed of the true Gospel. From that little seed we have a great institution today with many denominational branches. But alas! its thrifty development has invited into its branches the fowls of the air, which the Lord elsewhere describes as representing the Wicked One and his angels --Satan and his representatives--who of course should have no place in the Church; and they would have no

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place in it if the Church were loyal and zealous enough to proclaim only the true Gospel and the narrow way of self-denial.

Indeed, it is the neglect to preach this Gospel of the "narrow way" that has brought such prosperity to nominal Christianity and made it a desirable place for the fowls of the air--Satan and his deluded ones--to lodge in its branches, to be the real life of Ecclesiasticism. This seems to be the same picture which the same Great Teacher gives us in Revelation 18:2. There we read that the nominal systems are represented symbolically as Babylon;

and there we read, "She hath become the hold of every foul spirit and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

The word "cage" would seem to imply that these unclean birds are considered very desirable, and are held on to by nominal Christianity--probably because regarded as being amongst their best paying members and because of having the most attractions.

PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN

Throughout the Scriptures leaven is used as the symbol of sin. Thus when Jesus in His purity was to be symbolized as the "bread from heaven," the Jews were directed to use unleavened bread. Again, at their annual Passover season, the Jews were directed to cleanse their houses of leaven, to burn it up, to destroy it. Here again leaven was a symbol of sin, corruption. St. Paul, commenting on this, writes to the Church, "Purge out, therefore, the old leaven [sin, malice, hatred, strife, etc.], that you may be a new lump"--that you may be, with Christ, the one unleavened loaf. It is of this Loaf that he declares, "For we, being many, are One Loaf, and one Body; for we are all partakers of that One Loaf."--I Cor. 10:17.

It is true that in one of the official sacrifices bread was to be baked with leaven; but this, we believe, was for the very purpose of symbolizing or representing us, the Church, and the fact that we were by nature sinners, children of wrath, even as others, and that the baking would arrest the corrupting influences of the leaven; and this baking represented symbolically the experiences through which the Church must pass in order that sinful and corrupting tendencies might be completely destroyed in us.

In this parable our Lord represents a woman mixing leaven with a family baking of meal, with the result that the whole mass was leavened. Consequently, if any of the family desired pure, unleavened bread, it would be unobtainable, because the leaven pervaded the entire baking. What does this represent? We reply that in Scriptural symbolism a woman represents an ecclesiastical system. The woman in the parable represents a system organized and in power at an early date, and possessed of the pure meal--the pure food provided by the Lord for the household of faith.

The woman mixed leaven, error, false doctrine, with all the meal, with all the food supplied. Not a particle of it was left uncontaminated. The result has been indigestion. The Word of God, originally pure, is no longer accepted. The leaven, or fermentation, has spread so that

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today the entire mass of theological doctrine is putrid and offensive to all Christian people of all denominations.

The parable was a prophecy of what has occurred. It is time all true Christians were hearkening back from the creeds of the Dark Ages to the Words of Jesus, the Apostles

and the Prophets. We are glad to note that "His Holiness, the Pope," is prominent amongst those who are pointing back again to the teachings of the Bible, as being the unadulterated Word of God, which alone "is able to make us wise unto salvation," and by which alone "the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work."--2 Tim. 3:15-17.

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GOD'S WHEAT FIELD

--MATTHEW 13:24-30,36-43.--JULY 28.--

Text: "Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into My Garner."-- Verse 30.

OUR International Sunday School Lessons are specially helpful this year. We are glad that the selection contains so many lessons on the Kingdom. This topic heretofore has not had sufficient consideration, considering its prominence in the Bible--from the promise made to Abraham, recorded in Genesis, to the records of Revelation, representing the full establishment of the Kingdom, its binding of Satan, and its thousand years of prosperity, resulting in the bringing of "every creature in heaven and in earth" to worship and praise the Almighty, and in the abolishment of sin, tears and death.--Gen. 22:18; Rev. 20:2; 21:4; 5:13.

Today's study is another of the Kingdom parables, and one of the few which the Master particularly explained, and in harmony with which all the other parables are to be interpreted. Again it is the embryo Kingdom that is pictured, and not the Kingdom in glory; in other words, this parable also relates to this Gospel Age, and the work of selecting the Church. It therefore pictures the entire Age from start to finish.

"THE FIELD IS THE WORLD"

Our Lord's personal ministry was to the Jews only, and likewise His disciples labored only with the Jews for the fixed period of time--until the end of "the seventy weeks" of the promise of Divine favor to that nation. Those symbolic weeks ended three and a half years after Jesus' crucifixion. Then the door was thrown open to the Gentiles also, Cornelius being the first Convert.-- Acts 10.

This parable also shows us the very commencement of the Lord's call for His Bride from amongst all nations, and not from the Jews alone, although in the Divine Plan

it was necessary that they should have the first opportunity. So St. Paul declares, saying to the Jews, "It was necessary that the Gospel should be preached first unto you, but seeing ye reject it,...lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46.) The entire world constituted the "field" for the sowing of the "good seed," and the "good seed" is not any and every kind of a message, but is strictly defined, "the Gospel of the Kingdom."

Jesus and the Apostles sowed this "good seed," and all His true followers since have been authorized to continue the work in His name, and have more or less done so. But the Adversary, Satan, as pointed out here in the parable, brought in false doctrines, false teachings, a different kind of seed from the Kingdom "seed," and sowed this everywhere over the wheat field. The result is that today the "tares" are so plentiful, and so conspicuous that they think they are the "wheat," and the world in general so considers them.

The wheat class are considered "a peculiar people." Their hopes and ambitions in life are toward bearing good

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fruit, and "showing forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness." Of their good fruits the Apostle mentions meekness and humility, and these tend to bow their heads, while the "tares" stand proudly up, erect, in the display of their "form of godliness," which, however, lacks the power.

"LET BOTH GROW TOGETHER"

The Lord knew all the time what Satan would do in the way of perverting the Truth through false doctrines, which would tend to make void and belittle the Gospel of the Kingdom and the children of the Kingdom; but He allowed the matter to go on, fully assured that He would have in the end the crop which He desired, and very content to allow a great lesson to be taught by the presence of the "tares" and the ultimate treatment accorded the "wheat."

The Lord could have hindered the Adversary from bringing in the false doctrines in the early centuries, or He could have separated centuries ago between the wheat and tare classes, but this was not according to His intention, as the parable shows. He purposed to "let both grow together until the Harvest." So it has been true that Christians and imitation Christians have lived side by side in the same city, in the same house, and oftentimes in the same family--the one the result of the true Gospel Message of the Kingdom, leading to a full consecration and begetting of the Holy Spirit, and to the entrance upon a new life; the other with merely "a form of godliness," intermixed with worldly wisdom, earthly ambitions and selfish desires.

But the tares are not to grow on forever. Just as

surely as there was a beginning of this Age, there will be an ending. As surely as there was a sowing time for the good seed, there will be a reaping time, a Harvest time. In the Common Version the Words, "The Harvest is the end of the world," have been seriously misunderstood. It does not mean the end of time, nor the end of the earth--its destruction--nor the end of Divine favor. It merely means the end of the present Age--the close of the present dispensation. This Age will close when it has accomplished its intended work--when the full number of God's elect shall have been found faithful and ready for the "garner."

"IN THE TIME OF THE HARVEST"

This expression signifies that the Harvest of this Age will not be an instantaneous work, but a gradual one, requiring time. There is good reason for believing that the Harvest of this Age is a period of forty years, as the Harvest of the Jewish Age was of that length. In this time of the Harvest two things will be accomplished: (1) The tares will be gathered into bundles, ready for the burning--destruction. (2) The wheat, at the same time, will be gathered into the garner--the heavenly garner. This gathering into the heavenly garner is elsewhere represented as being the change from earthly to heavenly conditions, which will be accomplished for the Bride class in the end of the harvest, by the first resurrection. These

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will "all die like men." At the appointed time their resurrection change will take place and be invisible to men-- "sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown an animal body, raised a spirit body"; "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."--I Cor. 15:42-44; Rev. 20:6.

BURNING OF THE TARES.

"They shall gather out of His Kingdom all things which offend, and them which do iniquity;...there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Let us remember that these tares are not all of the world of mankind, but merely that portion of them associated with the Kingdom class--that portion which now verily believe that they are God's people, as the Pharisees considered themselves in the Harvest of the Jewish Age. There will be two classes amongst these tares: one class, "doers of iniquity (inequity, unrighteousness), the other class, those that have caused others to stumble. Doubtless this will include many teachers and preachers, and many doers of wonderful works.

But we must not forget that we are considering a parable, and that the "tares" are symbolical, and likewise

the "furnace" and the "fire." The interpretation is that, in the end of this Age, the Harvest time, there will be a great "time of trouble" for all nations, society, governments, financial institutions, etc. The wheat class will be saved from that "time of trouble" by the resurrection change. But the tares will not be saved from it; they will be cast into the trouble and have their portion with the hypocrites.

That trouble will not last forever. Many Scriptures seem to show that it will be terrific but of very short duration. It will be on the earth, and not in some far-off place. When the fire of that great day of anarchy and trouble shall cease to burn, there will be no more tares, there will be no more people having mere forms of godliness and pretensions for the Kingdom, begotten of error. All humanity will be greatly humbled, and, according to the Scriptures, ready and anxious for Messiah's Kingdom, which will then be established. It will be "the desire of all nations." (Hag. 2:7). Those formerly tares, as well as the remainder of the groaning creation, will welcome it and its blessings. In that Kingdom the righteous, the garnered, glorified wheat class "shall shine forth as the sun" for the blessing of all the families of the earth.-- Matt. 13:43; Gal. 3:29.

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THE KINGDOM A PRIZE

--MATTHEW 13:44-53.--AUGUST 4.--

Text:--"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."--Matt. 6:33.

TODAY WE HAVE further precious lessons from the Great Teacher respecting His Kingdom. The parable of the "Treasure hid in the Field," and the parable of the "Pearl of Great Price," both picture to us the great value of the Kingdom of Glory which is ultimately to be established amongst men for the blessing of the world. These parables also furnish lessons of what it will cost to secure a share, a place in that Kingdom. A third parable of the lesson treats of the embryo Kingdom; that is to say, the Parable of the "Net Cast into the Sea," pictures the condition of this present Age, during which the Elect, or Kingdom class, the Bride, is being found and gathered by the Lord's providences.

"TREASURE HID IN THE FIELD"

This is not one of the parables which Jesus expounded. His people, therefore, are left to exercise their judgment

of its meaning, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the light shed upon it by other Scriptures. Indeed, there might be more than one application of it correct. For instance, we might apply the parable to our Lord Jesus and say that He bought the whole world at the cost of all He had, and that He purchased the world because of the "treasure" which it contained. And that treasure might consist of a variety of treasures of different values--for instance, the Church, the Bride class, the Lord's special "treasure," and such of the world as will ultimately receive and be blessed by the Messianic Kingdom.

But our preference of thought is that the Great Teacher referred, not to Himself at all, but to those whom He instructed. By virtue of His own covenant of sacrifice, the Kingdom was already promised to Him, and He, in turn, in the Father's name, was inviting those who had the ears to hear, and heart to appreciate, to become members of His Bride class--members of His Kingdom class.

He recommends that these should view the Kingdom after the illustration of this parable. Suppose in their journeying they saw a field for sale at a certain price, and suppose, upon examination of it, they found it to contain a great treasure. The treasure might consist of very excellent soil, especially suited to their purpose, or it might

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consist of a valuable vein of precious metal, or it might consist of money buried long centuries ago and forgotten, and not belonging to the owner of the field more than to others who might find it. In such a case, the parable suggests, any one of ordinary intelligence would be willing to invest everything that he possessed to acquire the title.

So the Master declared to those who heard Him then, and to us who receive His words now, that He has information to give respecting a Great Treasure, a Priceless Treasure, which can be obtained, but only by the expenditure of great energy and the investment of everything of value. The Great Treasure is the share in the Messianic Kingdom--that by accepting the terms of discipleship we may become not only sons of God, but, if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord to His heavenly inheritance. This inheritance was the same as was promised to the Seed of Abraham, and we acquired an interest or share in it, not by being the actual seed of Abraham and the actual heirs to the Kingdom, but by becoming Messiah's Bride and Joint-heir.

When we think how much time and energy are put forth, and how much money and influence are expended to obtain some little, petty earthly honor of worldly renown and glory, and when we reflect that these at most will last but a few years and be unsatisfactory at best, then we can appreciate the better the glory, honor and immortality which God has in reservation for the "called and chosen and faithful," the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

A PEARL OF GREAT VALUE

In the days of our Saviour pearls were represented amongst the most precious and most desirable of jewels, and the larger and more nearly perfect the pearl the greater its value. The Great Teacher used this familiar matter as the basis for a lesson on the value of the Kingdom.

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The Merchant of the Parable found a Pearl so superior in every respect to all other pearls that he considered it cheap to give everything that he possessed to become the owner of that Pearl.

This, said the Master, illustrates the value of the Kingdom, with its glory, honor and immortality, which I am inviting an elect, saintly little flock to share with Me. Those who prize it properly will show their appreciation by the amount they will be willing and glad to pay for it. Whether a man be wealthy or poor, learned or ignorant, influential or otherwise, the cost of this Kingdom Pearl of great value will be--his all. It cannot be had for less.

The wealthiest or most talented person in the world could not obtain a share in that Kingdom if he kept back one single atom of his possessions; the price of the Kingdom is self-sacrifice, even unto death, and nothing less will secure it. Nor would any sacrifice that we could make secure a share in this Kingdom for us, except as our sacrifice would first be made acceptable in God's sight through the precious merit of our Redeemer's sacrifice, which He finished at Calvary.

THE PARABLE OF A FISH NET

We are not to think of the Kingdom as like a net, but to understand that the embryo Kingdom resembles a fishing experience with a net, in which were gathered all kinds of fish, which were brought to shore and sorted. This is a parable of the embryo Kingdom because it relates to a work done in this Age, in connection with the finding of the "little flock" who will constitute the Kingdom in glory. The Lord during this Age has not been fishing for all kinds of fish; He has not been seeking for all kinds of people. He has been calling, drawing especially, and dealing with, only the elect, only the saintly.

But, incidentally, a variety of other kinds of fish have gotten into the Gospel Net, some from worldly ambitions, some because religious systems are a good matrimonial field, others because of social privileges and standing, others because they desire to breathe a moral atmosphere, others because they would use religion as a cloak for business enterprises, etc. But the suitable fish, which the Lord is seeking, and who alone will constitute the Kingdom class, are those who hear His Message with joy and count the cost and appreciate the situation and desire to be "bond servants of the Lord Jesus Christ." They are willing

to suffer with Him now that they may be glorified together with Him in His Kingdom.

The parable tells us that "when the net was full it was drawn ashore" and the fish sorted. This evidently signifies that there will come a time in the end of this Age when the Lord will have gathered a sufficient number of saintly ones to serve His purpose--to complete the number foreordained by the Father to be members of the elect Church in glory. Then the fishing will cease. Who can say that the opportunity for entering the "net" as one of the true "fish" of the kind the Lord is seeking may not be almost at an end? Who can say that the Gospel Net, with its full assortment of churchianity of every style, will not soon be drawn ashore that the suitable, the elect, may be gathered into the Kingdom?

The unsuitable "fish" of this parable correspond with the "tares" of the parable considered a week ago. The "furnace of fire" will be the same "time of trouble" which will come upon the whole world of mankind very shortly. The unsuitable fish in the net are all church members--the unprofessing world are not represented in the parable at all.

Jesus asked His disciples if they understood the parable. They answered, Yes, and He told them to consider His parables as a householder would consider his reserve of food supplies, from which from time to time truths "both new and old" would be brought.

Our text emphasizes this study. If the Kingdom is the Pearl, and the Treasure, which the Master indicated--if we believe His testimony, then by all means let us show our faith, not merely by professions, but in every act and word. Let us seek the Kingdom as the pre-eminent matter of our lives, in comparison with which all other things are inferior, and, as St. Paul declared, "not worthy to be compared." If seeking the Kingdom seems to hinder some of our earthly prospects, so much the better. The Master said it must cost us our all. Our earthly considerations we have left in His hands. Let Him apportion our earthly blessings according to His wisdom of what will be most helpful to us in making our "calling and election sure" to a place in the Kingdom.

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SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

RELATIVE TO ANSWERING A FOOL

Question.--Please explain: "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."--Prov. 26:4,5.

Answer.--When talking to any one who speaks foolishly, do not talk foolishly in return. You dishonor yourself.

In the second case: "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit," would signify that you do him a service if you show him the folly of his position, thereby kindly helping him to a proper attitude of mind.

ARCHANGEL SIGNIFIES HIGHEST ANGEL

Question.--Is there, or will there be more than one Archangel?

Answer.--To speak of Archangels (plural) would be contrary to the Scriptures. The word archangel signifies highest angel, the prefix arch meaning the same as chief; for instance, the chief of the fire department. In the twelfth chapter of Daniel we read (vs. 1), "And at that time shall Michael [the Archangel] stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people." In the Hebrew the name Michael signifies One who as God, or like God. That One who is "like God," we understand to be the great Messiah, the Lord Jesus Himself. "Michael will stand up"--that is, Messiah will stand up, "Who standeth for the children of thy people"--that is, He will stand up for Israel. But He will also stand up for the Church, which is His Body, and for all who are in harmony with God, and all who will be in harmony with God. This will include all mankind during the Millennial Age. "In due time" they may be released from the bondage of corruption and death, and brought into full harmony with God.

RANSOM AND SIN-OFFERING

Question.--May we have a concise statement in which you differentiate between "Ransom" and "Sin-Offering"?

Answer.--The word "Ransom" signifies "corresponding price," and indicates one feature of the Divine arrangement for man's recovery. As by a man sin entered into the world, so the recovery would be by a man's redemptive work.--I Cor. 15:21,22.

The term "Sin-Offering" is used to represent the modus operandi by which this Ransom price will be used

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for the recovery of mankind. It shows the actual application of the Ransom price on behalf of mankind in securing their release from condemnation and in permitting the glorious New Covenant arrangement to go into effect.

The Ransom price has nothing whatever to do with the method by which that price will be applied. When our Lord Jesus died, He laid down a sufficient

price, but the application of that price is not yet completed. The grand outcome of the redemptive work will be seen in the end of the Millennial Age, when as a result of the application of the Ransom price there will be Christ and the Bride on the divine plane, the "Great Company" on the spirit plane, the "Ancient Worthies" in their perfected condition and the whole world of mankind restored to the perfection lost in Eden.

RE TERM "NEW CREATION"

Question.--Why is the term "New Creation" applied to the Church?

Answer.--The Scriptures tell us that our Lord was the Beginning of the Divine creation, the First-born of every creature, the First and the Last; that the Heavenly Father never created any other being; and that by our Lord all things else were made. In other words, the Father's power was exercised through His Only Begotten Son. According to the Scriptures, man was the last of

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the creations in God's image. But the Heavenly Father has purposed the creation of an order of beings higher than any that has been made, and has arranged that His Only Begotten Son shall be the One to occupy the highest position in that New Creation.

"For the joy that was set before Him" our Lord endured the cross, despised the shame, and then sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Originally, He was the first creation. Now He was the second creation --the new creation, in contradistinction. And the entire Church has been invited to come up to this highest place, to be associated with Christ, to be partakers of the divine nature. But in order to attain to this high position, to be with Him, they must become dead to the earthly nature and its interests, its aims and its projects, and alive with Him beyond the veil. Jesus is the Head of this New Creation, of which the Church is the Body. We do not understand that the "Great Company" will be a part of the New Creation. Only the "Little Flock" will have the honor of being members of Christ's Body.

Eventually, when the Divine Plan shall have reached its consummation, there will be Jehovah, the Head over all things and the Head over Christ; next will come our Lord and the Church which is His Body; then will come the various orders of angels, and lastly mankind. As the Apostle in his letter to the Ephesians tells us, "In the dispensation of the fulness of times, God will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him."-- Eph. 1:9,10.

SIN-OFFERING AND SIN-ATONEMENT

Question.--What is the difference between Sin-Offering and Sin-Atonement?

Answer.--The term "Sin-Offering" relates to the presentation of something sacrificially, as an offering or sacrifice, on account of sin and on behalf of the sinner. It thus relates, not only to the work of the Lord Jesus in His own person during the work of His ministry of three and a half years, when He offered up Himself, but also to Him as the High Priest when He offers up the members of His Body, during this Gospel Age. The entire work is sacrificial; and since this offering is on account of sin, it is, therefore, a sin-offering. The sin-offering must be complete before the result can be applied.

When our Lord ascended up on high, He completed His own personal work; and on account of the merit which He possessed He was enabled to become the Advocate of the Church--those who become the members of His prospective Body. Since He intends to make application of that merit for the sins of the whole world, after He has offered in sacrifice the members of the Church, He therefore delays the matter of the presentation of the Sin-offering merit until the entire offering has been completed--until the Church shall be with Him in glory; for "if we suffer [with Him] we shall also reign with Him."--2 Tim. 2:12.

The expression "Sin-Atonement" may be used in respect to any part of the work of making satisfaction on account of sin. Strictly speaking, however, the term Sin-Atonement applies to the satisfaction of Justice on behalf of mankind. Man has been condemned; Justice executed a sentence, and in order that man may be released, Justice must be satisfied.

Let us not in any sense of the word confound Sin-Atonement with Sin. After sin has been atoned for, then the sinner will be given an opportunity to return to the original perfection in which Adam was created and from which he fell. The Sin-Atonement, therefore, will be completed when Christ shall have presented His merit on account of the entire world. But the results of sin will not be fully removed until the end of the thousand years of the reign of Messiah.

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SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:--

I am impressed to see how our dear Lord is now leading His people along!

About the time of your recent return from abroad I wrote

you a letter regarding some matters, with questions, etc. Thinking this too long, I did not send it, but wrote another letter, only to be dissatisfied with it also, and finally discarded the idea of writing, knowing how entirely your time is occupied.

But when, in the last TOWER, I found a complete answer to all my questions, I thought I would tell you about it.

I have of late been appreciating these things as I had not done before; I can see that if many truths we now have had been presented before, we would not have been able to see them so clearly.

We are glad that the Lord of the Harvest knows and is able to give "Meat in due season"--when we are able to receive and use it to His glory and our good!

"The Mortal Body the Servant of the New Mind"; "The Palace of Blessedness"; "Ye Were Bought with a Price"; "Beware of Pride in the Heart"; "Moses as a Mediator," etc., are certainly good for me! I try to feel that the dear Lord sent all such to me just as though there were not another person in the world. In this way I seem to get more out of it and am kept from thinking where it might fit others!

I want the Lord's arrangements to fit me for the Kingdom, and since this is true of all of His "little ones," we may be a help to one another in the Narrow Way.

The sermons, too, seem more impressive, as we should expect, since the dear Lord says "The path of the just shall shine more and more unto the perfect day."

I ask that you pray that I may be more and more illuminated with this blessed Truth until I shall become one of the "rays" of the same great Fountain of Light and Truth with our dear Lord and all the faithful in Him!

Praying God ever to bless and keep you to the end of the

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way, and to grant you "an abundant entrance into the Kingdom" for which our hearts long, by His grace I beg to remain

Your brother in hope,

EMORY WILLIAMS.--Texas.

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"THE JOY OF THE LORD OUR STRENGTH"

DEAR PASTOR AND BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Please accept my hearty "Welcome Home." If I can guess by my own experience, I would think you are very happy to be home again, but O! so glad to have had the opportunity to take the glorious Gospel around the world. How happy and blessed must be your heart in the great work you have been chosen to accomplish in this grand Harvest Time! May our dear Heavenly Father give you strength and continual grace to finish it.

Dear Brother Russell, my own experiences on my trip to

Europe were at times very interesting and brought great blessings to me. I can say in truth that I am glad I was able to go out there; but how happy I was when the time came to come back! I was away just three months.

I intended to send some little report to you on your trip, but thought you will get so much mail all the time that so many letters might bother you. I myself did not get any. Even though the children wrote, the letters never came.

I found very many hungry Christians in Germany who were glad to hear the good news. I spent many half nights telling the glad story. It was very strange to my relatives. Seven years ago I sent them each the three volumes, but not one of them had read, but had loaned them all. Some of the books traveled a long distance, to Munich, and were read by a Catholic priest, a Protestant minister and others. Some of them went to Colmar, and others were loaned and not returned. Strange to say, my friends were consecrated Christians and praying for more light all the time. When they heard that I was coming they hoped I would bring them some Truth, and when they heard the glad tidings they accepted it. They seemed to me to be quite able to grasp the Truth. My dear brother, who knew nothing but Catholicism, cried for joy. Five of my relatives have now accepted the Truth.

And now, praying that grace and peace may be multiplied unto you, I remain,

Your sister in Christ, F. MUNTZER.

BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:--

After our enjoyable visit to Brooklyn, Sister Thorn and I returned home more than ever encouraged to take up the cross daily and follow our Master faithfully, unto death.

We especially enjoyed being at "Bethel" and the privilege of sitting at your table, listening to the helpful discussions and table-talks. Our interview with you in your study was also very helpful and drew us nearer to you. It was truly a "holy week" to us.

Last Sunday, at the close of the afternoon service at Lynn, I told the friends of our intention to re-unite with the Boston Class, I. B. S. A. At the conclusion of my remarks prayer was offered and we sang, "Blest be the tie," etc. We believe we left with the good will of the entire Class.

We then proceeded to Boston, arriving there in time for the evening meeting. After a few testimonies had been given I gave mine, reminding the friends that if we had any differences to settle with one another--not hereafter, but right here, these things must be adjusted.

I then confessed having made some unintentional mistakes which I feared had caused them unnecessary pain, and that I was truly repentant and asked their forgiveness, also requesting that we might have closer fellowship with the dear Boston Class.

We were assured of their forgiveness, and after several had expressed their joy in hearing our words (for I assured

them that I spoke for Sister Thorn as well as for myself),
the whole Class by a rising vote expressed their love and a
hearty welcome.

Both at Lynn and at Boston it was a heart-mellowing
time--a most blessed day to us all. Many tears of joy were
shed as the dear friends shook hands with us. We feel sure
that you, too, will rejoice with us. Kindly remember us both
in your prayers.

With much Christian love from Sister Thorn and myself,
I am as ever,

Your brother and fellow-servant in Christ,
WALTER J. THORN.--Mass.

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PASTOR RUSSELL'S FOREIGN ITINERARY

Liverpool, England.....July 23 ----- France.....Aug. 7
Oldham, " " 24 ----- " " 8
Carlisle, " " 25 ----- " " 9
Glasgow, Scotland " 26-28 Paris, " " 11
Aberdeen, " " 29 Geneva, Switzerland..... " 12
Kirkcaldy, " " 30 Milhausen, Germany..... " 13
New Castle on Tyne, Eng..... " 31 Sasle, Switzerland..... " 14
Leeds, EnglandAug. 1 Zurich, " " 15
Coventry, " " 2 St. Gallen, " " 16
London, " " 3,4 Berlin, Germany..... " 18
----- France " 6 Dresden, " " 19

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