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THE NEW CREATURE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO DIVINE LAW

PART I

THE LAW COVENANT was a Covenant that God made with Israel, based upon the keeping of the Law, which was briefly expressed in the Ten Commandments. The Apostle Paul says that our Lord was born under the Law (Gal. 4:4); not under the Ten Commandments merely, but under the Law Covenant. This Law Covenant, the Apostle elsewhere shows, was that addition to the Abrahamic Covenant which was typified by Hagar and not by Sarah. Our Lord was under this Hagar Covenant, then--under the Law Covenant, the Covenant of the flesh--up to the time when He was thirty years of age.

We have no record whatever respecting our Lord's obedience to the Law before He became of age, although we have every reason to believe that He kept the Law Covenant. But the time of His special trial began at His baptism. The fact that God was willing to enter into a Covenant of sacrifice with our Lord shows that He was perfect at that time. Our Lord persisted in keeping the

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Law during the time of His ministry, and at the same time sacrificed those rights which were His because of keeping the Law.

With our Lord it was the same as with Adam. Jesus was perfect at the time of His baptism; therefore, no one could question His right to life. Consequently, God dealt with Him as with One who had life rights. But as Adam was placed on trial to see whether he would prove faithful, so our Lord Jesus was on trial during the three and a half years of His ministry, to prove His worthiness to retain His life rights. If He had failed to keep the Law any time during His ministry, He would have failed to have Divine approval. Likewise if He had failed to keep His Covenant of sacrifice He would have failed to make His calling and election sure.

CONDITION OF HEART TESTED CONTINUOUSLY

What our Lord did in this matter is on a parity with what each one of us does. We come to the Lord in the beginning and present ourselves living sacrifices; His acceptance of us and the imputation of His merit to us makes us perfect beings from the Divine standpoint. Everyone who is perfect in the flesh has a right to life, according to the Divine Law. But the fact that we have a right to life for the moment, does not prove that it will be everlasting.

At the end of the thousand years of Christ's reign the world will be actually perfect. They will then be subjected to a testing to prove whether or not this perfection is deep and abiding, whether or not it is the permanent condition of their hearts. So it was with our Lord. Before His consecration He certainly had no such trials and contradictions of sinners against Himself as He had afterwards. "Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself?" (Heb. 12:3.) Practically all His trials began at the time of His consecration. We have no reason to suppose that our Lord was undergoing a trial for life or death before His consecration.

When our Lord was thirty years old, He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. His trial, which was to prove His worthiness, began at His consecration and continued until His death. For three years and a half the spirit of His mind was being tested. If during that time He had committed any sin whatever, would He have been accepted of God then? Surely not! He was on trial, not as an old creature, but as a New Creature, and His trial did not end until on the cross He cried, "It is finished!" This did not alter the fact, however, that He was still under the Law. The Law had dominion over Him as long as He lived. As a New Creature He did not have a body of the spirit kind. He had a human body, and was, therefore, responsible for everything that His human body would do.

It is just so with us. The body is reckoned dead in

one sense of the word. As the Apostle says, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." Does this refer to us merely as New Creatures? Yes. Is not our flesh reckoned dead? Yes, but we are figuratively raised from the dead. (Rom. 6:4,5; Col. 3:1.) To whatever extent our bodies fall short of perfect obedience, Christ, as the great Advocate, makes good. So if any of us sin, we have an Advocate with the Father. No matter how trivial the sin may be, it is a sin. God keeps no accounts with the flesh, but holds the New Creature responsible. It is for these weaknesses of the flesh that the New Creature goes daily to the Lord and says, "Forgive us our trespasses." We have an Advocate with God, and if we sin we may come to God and obtain grace in every time of need.--I John 2:1; Heb. 4:16.

THE TWO-FOLD TRIAL OF THE NEW CREATURE

As we have seen, when our Lord made His consecration at His baptism, He was a perfect human being. When the Father accepted His sacrifice, He was begotten again; and He was to this degree a new soul, a New Creature--spirit. But He had this treasure of the new mind in an earthen vessel, and the New Creature was responsible for all that the old creature did. If the old

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creature had gotten Him into trouble, the New Creature would have been responsible.

As previously stated, our Lord was under the domination of the Law as long as He lived. The question then arises, How long did He live as a man? Our answer is that in a very important sense of the word He died at the time of His baptism; that is to say, He died so far as His human will was concerned, but His human body did not die. His human body, therefore, was still as liable to every Law as it had been before. He became a New Creature in the spirit of His mind, but a New Creature without a new body; and in the Divine arrangement the New Creature accepted and used the old earthly body, with all the responsibilities of that earthly body, whatever they might be.

In other words, the flesh has its law and its responsibilities. But as a New Creature our Lord was under an additional law. We are not to understand that as a New Creature He was released from the Ten Commandments. In his flesh He was a perfect human being, under the Law. As a New Creature He undertook to do more than merely keep the Law; and so the New Creature was on trial--not merely to prove whether the flesh would live up to the requirements of the Law, but whether the flesh should be brought into subjection to the higher law of the New Creation. Thus our Lord more than kept the Law--not less than kept the Law.

Jesus died to the Law Covenant, but not to the Law,

at the time that He made His consecration. He was not relieved from His responsibility to the Law according to the flesh, but as a New Creature He gave up all hope, all anticipation, as respects that Law Covenant. When He gave up the human nature He would have no use for that which applied to the human nature, which He was giving up in order to get something better. Therefore, He died to the Law Covenant, not because He could not keep it, but because by becoming dead to that Covenant He might become alive to the Covenant of sacrifice. The blessings of that Law Covenant would have been merely earthly life. So when our Lord consecrated Himself, He sacrificed everything that went with the Law Covenant.

NO ADVOCATE FOR OUR LORD

If our Lord's human nature had failed to keep the Law, the New Creature would have been held responsible. It is the same with us, as we have illustrated before in the case of a man and his dog. The New Creature is like the man and the old creature like the dog. But the man is responsible for the dog. If the dog does damage or bites anyone, the owner is responsible. God has made a special arrangement for us, however, by which we may go to the throne of heavenly grace for the imperfections of the flesh, because we have an Advocate. But Jesus had no Advocate; and therefore any misdeed on the part of His flesh would be charged to Him directly, as He would be responsible for all the flesh might do.

As we have seen, our Lord at thirty years of age was a perfect man, accountable under the Law Covenant. When He had made a consecration and when that consecration had been accepted by the Father, He was counted alive as a New Creature and reckoned dead as an old creature. These facts should not cause us to lose sight of the other fact that He was not really a New Creature, but merely begotten to a new nature, and that He would not be entirely free from the earthly nature until He was actually dead.

So, then, as a New Creature our Lord was responsible for all of God's laws that applied to Him as a man. The fact that He had given up all the earthly hopes and ambitions and privileges did not give Him liberty to violate the Law of God; and therefore His passing from under the Law Covenant did not give Him liberty to break the Law.

Even so with us. We cannot trespass against our neighbor in any degree. The fact that we have become New Creatures in Christ makes us still more responsible for good behavior. We have need of the Lord's covering merit for every fleshly imperfection that we have. The very fact that we have need of that covering for our fleshly imperfections shows that our every thought, word and action are taken cognizance of by God; and since we are still imperfect, an arrangement is provided for us by which we may go to the Throne of Grace and have

our weaknesses covered by our Lord's merit.

GRAVE RESPONSIBILITY RESTING ON OUR LORD

But our Lord had nothing to shield Him. Although He had given up all hope of human life, that He might have the spiritual blessings, yet He was responsible for every feature of the Divine Law.

The Divine Law has always existed. God always had certain laws of right and wrong; He Himself is under a law of righteousness. Our Lord Jesus and all the holy angels are subject to a law of righteousness. What ceased at our Lord's consecration was the Covenant promise of life which was based upon that Law and which had been won by our Lord. Since no imperfect being can keep that Law, another arrangement is made for us --a sacrificial arrangement, based upon our Lord's merit, imputed to us. "Gather My saints together unto Me; those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." --Psa. 50:5.

From the Divine standpoint our Lord kept the Law as a New Creature; from the human standpoint He kept it as an earthly creature. To God we are one thing; to men we are another. Before God Jesus had the standing of the New Creature. But He did not keep the Law merely in the spirit; He kept it in the letter as well. As for ourselves, we cannot keep the letter of the Law, but we must keep the spirit of it. Our Lord, being perfect,

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kept the Law both in spirit and in letter. Every act of obedience to the Law was credited to the New Creature, and any failure would have brought death. Even though the account was entered in the name of the New Creature, these acts of obedience were only credited to it. Just as a parent might put into the bank money for a child, the child does not have the money and cannot receive it until he becomes of age; so with our Lord. Everything that He did was put to His credit. And if He had done anything wrong, it would have been charged to the New Creature. "The wages of sin is death."--Rom. 6:23.

CHANGE OF NATURE A GRADUAL PROCESS

But had our Lord remained under the Law Covenant, He would not have become the heir; for the child of the bondwoman could not become heir with the son of the freewoman. (Gal. 4:30.) The son of the freewoman was the New Creature.

When our Lord made the Covenant of sacrifice at Jordan He passed from His position under the Law Covenant and from His fleshly relationship to Abraham, into the spiritual relationship and became the spiritual "Seed" of Abraham; for there He sacrificed all the blessings and favors which were His under the Law Covenant.

But we are to remember that in our Lord's case, this change of nature required three and a half years. He did not pass instantaneously from one relationship to the other, but by a process in which He was dying daily and

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also becoming alive daily. He had accepted the terms of the Covenant of sacrifice. During those three and one-half years, He was in the process of transfer from the Law Covenant to the Sacrificial Covenant. After He had fulfilled the terms of that Covenant, He was put to death in the flesh, and quickened in the spirit. (I Peter 3:18. R.V.) But He did not enter into the glorious station typified by Isaac until after His resurrection from the dead.

So it is with us. We renounce the earthly that we may share in the heavenly. But the change requires a period of time, during which we are dying daily and becoming more alive daily. We shall be made fully alive only in our resurrection, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. (I Cor. 15:50.) While this change is not instantaneous, but by degrees, yet the Father dealt with our Lord from the moment of His consecration, and so He deals with us. We have the foretaste of the blessing now, but it will not be ours completely until the sacrifice shall have been finished. Our Lord's baptism did not constitute Him The Christ in the full sense of the word, but He was declared to be The Christ with power when He was raised upon the spirit plane.--Rom. 1:4.

PURPOSE OF OUR LORD'S SUFFERING

The Scriptures give us to understand that our Lord's sufferings produced a variety of results. First of all, those sufferings were in fulfilment of the Law, and by them He testified His obedience to the Law of God. He suffered for well-doing and not for evil-doing. Second, it was appropriate that He should prove to God His loyalty and faithfulness, so as to establish His worthiness to be made the great Messiah and to be granted the great power and glory which Messiah will exercise.

The Apostle Paul gives us this particular thought, when he says that it pleased God to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through suffering. (Heb. 2:10.) At the same time this suffering would demonstrate our Lord to be the great Messiah who would eventually lead the people out of sin and death. The Apostle also intimates that His sufferings were expedient and wise for the assistance of those who would be His followers, when he says that this High Priest was touched with a feeling of our infirmities, that He might be able to sympathize with those who are in trouble. He was faithful Himself, having gone through various trials and testings.--Heb. 4:15.

When mankind come to know how it was that Messiah assumed control of the world, all humanity will have full confidence in Him--not only in the power with which He will rule His Kingdom, but also in His justice, His love and His mercy. He has been tempted in all points as the Church is, and therefore, not only can we have the benefit resulting from His experience, but the whole world in the future may also have an opportunity to appreciate it.

The sufferings of Jesus became a witness both to angels and to men. He gave the demonstration of the full extent of loyalty even unto death. As a reward the Father did not give Him merely the high position that He had at first, but exalted Him to His own right hand in the heavenly places, "Far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named" (Eph. 1:21); even to the divine nature. All this was a part of the Father's great Plan; and by our Lord's experiences we see that the Heavenly Father has demonstrated His Justice, His Power and His Love in a most marvelous way.

THE CHURCH'S EXPERIENCES SIMILAR TO OUR LORD'S

Our Lord's perfecting, indeed, was a little different from ours, and yet there is a similarity between the two. He was perfect before He humbled Himself; He was still perfect as the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself; but as a result of His consecration He received a begetting of the Holy Spirit to the divine nature, and His development as a New Creature required that He faithfully carry out His vow, or Covenant, of sacrifice, in the doing of the will of the Heavenly Father. By such faithfulness He perfected Himself on the divine plane--that is, He proved Himself worthy according to the Covenant--"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing."--Rev. 5:12.

Similarly the followers of Jesus are to be sharers with Him of the sufferings of this present time and in the glories which shall follow, for "If we suffer [with Him] we shall also reign with Him." (2 Tim. 2:12.) Although we are imperfect in the flesh, while He was perfect, yet the Robe of His Righteousness, the merit of His sacrifice, covers all of our blemishes and makes us, as His footstep followers, holy and acceptable before the Father, as joint-sacrificers with Jesus.

The begetting of the Holy Spirit starts us in the life divine. We are not to be perfected in the flesh, but in the spirit; and our perfection and acceptance with the Father will be demonstrated by our loyalty of heart and the fulness and thoroughness with which we submit our all to the Divine will and seek to glorify God in our bodies and spirits, which are His. Our justification comes to us as a reward of faith, regardless of works, but our glorification will follow only as a reward for faithfulness--"Be

thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."--Rev. 2:10.

(Continued in next issue.)

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FEET-WASHING AS A LESSON IN HUMILITY

"Ye also ought to wash one another's feet."--John 13:14.

WE REMEMBER the occasion on which our Lord washed the feet of His disciples. The Lord and His twelve Apostles had met in the upper room to commemorate the Passover Supper. This feast was followed by the inauguration of the Memorial Supper, the bread and wine of which represented the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus. The disciples, full of the enthusiasm which had been incited for some days previous, were all at a loss to understand the sadness of our Lord Jesus. While He was saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38) and desiring that His baptism might be accomplished, they were inclined to think that He was taking a pessimistic view of matters.

During the five preceding days the disciples had witnessed the feast in the house of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, the breaking of the alabaster box of ointment, the riding on the ass, and the spreading of palm branches for the little animal to walk on, and the demonstration of the people, who had cried, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!" (Matt. 21:9.) They had heard the Pharisees ask Jesus to put a stop to this demonstration. But He had said to them that if these people should hold their peace the very stones would cry out. (Luke 19:40.) To fulfil the

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prophecy (Zech. 9:9) there must be a shout, and there was a shout.

We remember that the little company went to the Temple, that the whole city was in commotion, that the rulers were impressed, and that they were afraid of the people. We remember that Jesus had gone into the Temple and had driven out those who sold merchandise; that when the Pharisees, the Sadducees and others tried to make Jesus appear confused, He had wisely turned all their arguments upon themselves; and that they dared not ask Him any more questions, for by so doing they would only make a bad matter worse.

From all these things it must have seemed to the Apostles that they were on the eve of attaining great

prominence and that Jesus would be exalted. Therefore, they could not understand His attitude of sorrow. As an evidence, we have the fact that James and John went to Jesus and asked about the place they might occupy in the Kingdom. Could they be next to Him? There was no doubt in their minds that the Kingdom was near. They specially loved Him and would like to have the

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favor of being near Him. Others might not care so much where they were placed, but James and John would like to be close to the Master.

These were the thoughts uppermost in their minds. As a result, when they came to the upper room, they had not the humility of mind to take thought of serving. No doubt it was the custom of the Jews to have a servant to minister to the comfort of the guests. But there was no servant here and not one of them had the humility of mind to offer to be the servant. Apparently they not only did not have the disposition to serve one another, but they did not desire to wash even the Master's feet.

SELFISHNESS EVEN IN LOVE

Since it is difficult for us to gage our own hearts thoroughly, we should use great charity in measuring the hearts and intentions of others, and should err on the side of too great sympathy and leniency rather than on that of too strong condemnation. Doubtless had the Apostles been asked as to their motives and conduct, they would have denied that these were selfish, and would have spoken only of their zeal for the Lord and their desire to be near Him. This illustrates to us what the Scriptures declare, that the human heart is exceedingly deceitful, and that it requires careful scrutiny, lest under the cloak of good motives, it harbor qualities which, if recognized, it would spurn.

Apparently our Lord let the matter go to its full limit to see whether or not any of His followers would improve the opportunity to make himself servant of all. He waited until supper was being served (not ended as in our common Version); then, arising from the table, He laid aside His mantle and got a basin and a towel. Then, girding up His garments to keep them from getting into the water, He proceeded to wash their feet.

We can well imagine the consternation of the Apostles as they watched the procedure, and then saw the Lord go from the feet of one to those of another, as they protruded from the couches on which the Apostles reclined. The method of feet-washing at that time was different from that of today. The water was poured from a pitcher in a small stream upon the feet, which were washed and rinsed. The basin was merely a receptacle for receiving the soiled water.

OUR LORD'S ACT A DEEP SPIRITUAL LESSON

This act was a pointed reproof for their neglect to wash His feet and one another's. They were all silent until He came to St. Peter. When our Lord paused before him, St. Peter said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet!" St. Peter had too much reverence to wish the Lord to be his servant. He had as a natural trait, more than had some of the others, that courage, or boldness, which led him to speak out. But the Lord said to him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." (John 13:8.) St. Peter did not understand how this washing would give him a part with the Lord, but he said eagerly, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head," if this gives me a more particular part with You. The Lord answered him, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." I am doing all that is necessary. What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall understand hereafter.--See verses 7-10.

In all this the Lord was giving a deep spiritual lesson --that no one is naturally fit for the Kingdom. Each one needs to be washed, to be cleansed, before he can be a joint-sufferer, before he can be a joint-heir. He must be a joint-sacrificer in order to become a member of The Christ. Jesus said to His disciples, You have witnessed My humility in this matter, and now I want to tell you that you ought to have this attitude toward one another. You should have been careful for even the humblest one in your number. Whether or not it was by washing My feet and those of all the others, you should have done whatever was necessary for the refreshment of the company.

THE ACT NOT THE INSTITUTION OF A CEREMONY

We are to remember that things were different then from what they are today. Because of the wearing of sandals, the feet would be considerably soiled even after only a short journey and would, therefore, need refreshing. It was the custom that the servant should come forth and make the guests comfortable--not to the inconvenience of the traveler, but to his further comfort. This was a menial service, which afforded Jesus the opportunity to impress upon His Apostles the lesson of the necessity of humility in all the members of the Body of Christ.

We do not get a lesson of the institution of a formal ceremony. It was only a case of necessity, of which the Lord took advantage to give a lesson of humility. No such need exists with us today. Our streets are paved and we wear shoes that are closely laced and are sufficient protection. So there is no necessity to wash each other's feet, at a public gathering, to have a public exhibition of feet-washing.

The incident affords a lesson in humility to us as well as it afforded one to the Apostles. We should be glad

to do any service, even to the humblest of the members of Christ, in whatever way the opportunity may come. There is no suggestion in the Scriptures that feet-washing was ever done as a ceremony. We have an intimation, however, that feet-washing was a custom in Palestine. In I Tim. 5:9-16, we read that if a widowed sister had washed the saints' feet, meaning that if she had shown such a disposition, St. Paul would advocate a special care for such a sister in need; for she had manifested a loyal and true spirit.

There are some very good Christian people who have adopted feet-washing as a religious custom. We are not to berate them unnecessarily for following their consciences. Rather we should say to them that so long as they think they are doing the Lord's will, they are right to follow the custom; but that the Scriptures relate only this one case where the feet-washing was done in public, and it was very unlikely, therefore, that it was ever done in public by the Church except on this occasion. As the

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commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," has a deeper meaning than that one shall not take the life of another, so this washing of feet has a deeper meaning. Throughout His ministry Jesus indicated the deeper thought by His treatment of others; He lightened the burden and happified the condition of those with whom He came in contact. So we should do all in our power for the consecrated ones, members of Christ's Body.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ONE ANOTHER

This lesson suggests that the members of Christ's Body should have a mutual watch-care over one another's welfare; to keep each other pure, holy, clean and to assist one another in overcoming the trials, temptations and besetments of this present evil world, arising from the three sources of temptation--the world, the flesh and the Devil. Only as we cultivate the various graces of the Spirit--meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love--can we hope to be specially helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and in getting rid of the defilements of the world and of the flesh.

It requires peculiar qualifications to enable us to assist each other in this respect. Before we can help others to cleanse their way of life in every little particular, so that every thought, word and deed shall be brought into subjection to the Divine will, it is necessary that we have experience along the same lines. Only as we cultivate purity of thought, word and deed in our own lives, only as we put on the various graces of the Spirit, can we wash the feet of the saints.

Many who would reject well-meant criticism of conduct, who would resent well-meant offers of assistance to

a higher standard of character, as interferences with their private business, would be very amenable to the influence of the same person if he approached them with such evidences of true devotion and loving interest as would be indicated by the performance of some menial act. It is the sympathetic ones who are most successful in helping the various members of the Body of Christ out of the besetments and difficulties incident to the following of the Lord in the present time. Oh, let us study and strive and pray that we may be very successful in obeying the Master's injunction, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet!"

How many opportunities we have for comforting, refreshing, consoling and assisting one another in some of the humblest affairs of daily living or in respect to some of the unpleasant duties, experiences or trials of life! By love we are to serve one another, but not as a mere formality. Any service done or attempted to be done in love, with the desire to do good to one of the Lord's people, has, we may be sure, the approval of the Head of the Church.

Let us lose no opportunities of this kind; let us remember the Master's example. Let us not merely assume the guise of humility, but let us actually have that grace of character which will enable us to do kindnesses and service to all with whom we come in contact. Then we shall all the more enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the Body of Christ--The Christ.

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"CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE"

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."--Hebrews 10:35.

WITH VERY MANY of God's people, as well as with the world's people, the ideal Christian life is one of constant peace and tranquility. They have never learned that "the peace of God which passeth all [worldly] understanding," promised to the Christian, is to rule in and keep his heart (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15), but does not apply to his outward life. They forget, or perhaps never learned, that our Master's words were, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in Me ye shall have peace" [in your hearts]. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of His household?" "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus [in this present world, or dispensation], shall suffer persecution." It is of a wicked class, and not of the saints, that the Prophet declared,

"They are not in trouble as other men."--John 16:33; 15:18; Matt. 10:25; 2 Tim. 3:12; Psa. 73:5.

Only to those who have some knowledge of God's great Plan is His dealing with His people understandable and readable. The world marvels that those whom God receives into His family, as sons by redemption and adoption, should be required or even permitted to suffer afflictions. But to the well-instructed saint the Apostle says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." (I Pet. 4:12.) And this saint may now clearly discern the object and utility of present trials, afflictions and persecutions. He sees that these are in fullest accord with his high calling, his heavenly calling --to be an heir of God and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ our Lord, "if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."--Rom. 8:17.

But why should a share in the coming glory be made dependent upon present sufferings? We answer, For two reasons:

POSITIVE CHARACTER NECESSARY

(1) Severe trials and testings of our love for God and for His Truth, and of our faith in Him and in His promises, are only a wise provision on God's part, in view of the very high honor and responsibility of the great office to which He has called us. If it was proper that our Lord and Redeemer should be tested in all points as to faith and obedience before His exaltation to the excellent glory and power of the divine nature, much more so it is fitting that we, who were once aliens and strangers, far from God, and children of wrath even as others, should be thoroughly tested.

We are not tested as to the perfection of our earthen vessels, for God and we well know that in our fallen flesh dwelleth no perfection; but tested as to our new minds, our consecrated wills, whether or not these are fully consecrated to the Lord, firmly established in the love of truth, purity and righteousness in general. We are also tested to see whether we will compromise any of the principles of righteousness for worldly favor, selfish ambition, or for any of "the pleasures of sin for a season." Those who love righteousness and hate iniquity, who develop positive characters, these are the "overcomers" who shall, as members of Christ, inherit all things. The undecided, the lukewarm--neither cold nor hot--are far from having the spirit of the Kingdom class, and will surely be rejected--"spewed out."--Rev. 3:16.

LOVE, NOT SELFISHNESS, THE RULING PRINCIPLE

(2) A share in the coming glory is dependent upon present sufferings, for the reason that the coming glories are to be bestowed only upon those who have the Spirit

of Christ, the spirit of holiness. And whoever has received this Holy Spirit, or disposition, and has been transformed by the renewing of his mind, or will, so that no longer selfishness but love shall rule over his thoughts and words and deeds, that person, if in the world at all, could not avoid present suffering. His love for God, his zeal for God's service and people, his faith in God's Word and his uncompromising attitude respecting everything relating to these, would be so greatly in contrast with the prevalent spirit of doubt, selfishness and compromise that he would be thought peculiar, called an extremist and a fanatic, if not a hypocrite.

Evil surmisings, out of hearts not fully consecrated, will attribute every good deed to some selfish or evil motive, and, therefore, "Ye shall be hated of all men for My [Christ's] name's sake"; for "the world knoweth [understandeth] us not, because it knew Him not." (Luke 21:17; I John 3:1.) The reason for all this is evident: it is because "the god of this world hath blinded the eyes" of the vast majority of men; because the faithful, who appreciate the Truth, who have new hearts (wills) and the right spirit on these subjects, are but a "little flock."

PRESENT CONDITIONS MOST FAVORABLE FOR OVERCOMING

These conditions will not be changed until the testing of the "little flock" is finished. God will permit evil to be in the ascendancy until that testing, sifting, refining and polishing of the Bride of Christ is fully accomplished. Then Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, and not be permitted to blind and deceive the nations during the Millennial Age of blessing; but, on the contrary, the "little flock" of overcomers, with Christ, their Lord and Head, will bless all the families of the earth with a full knowledge of the Truth.

Therefore, dear brethren and sisters, let us give heed to the Apostle's words, and not cast away our confidence --confidence in God, in the outworking of His great Plan, and in all who trust in the precious blood and are bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit in their daily lives --meekness, patience, brotherly kindness, love.

CONFIDENCE THE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN EFFORT

With some of the Lord's people, however, there is a tendency to become discouraged, to think that they may have been unfaithful and thus to lose their peace of mind. In some instances, this feeling of discouragement leads to such fear and distress that the Second Death is apprehended. The Apostle seems to have in mind this condition. We are surrounded with imperfection of both judgment and conduct; and those who have a proper estimate

of themselves must know that they come far short of the Divine standard and of their own vow of consecration. This knowledge should tend to make all very humble, and very generous in considering others, but not to discourage us.

St. Paul exhorts all such, saying, "Cast not away your confidence." Let such remember that the fact that they have received this Divine favor is an indication that their offering has had Divine acceptance. Faith, or confidence, in God and in the "great and precious promises" is the very basis of all Christian endeavor. Without this faith one cannot fight a good fight. In proportion as the promises are before our minds, in that proportion we have strength and courage to run the narrow way.

If a follower of the Lord has been thus discouraged or has felt that his expectations have not been realized, he should not be weary in well doing. He should go to the Lord in prayer and renew his vow of consecration. He should rise from the ashes of discouragement and lift the cross with renewed zeal. He should endeavor to walk on a higher plane than ever. If he lose confidence, lose faith, he will easily be overcome by the Adversary.

The very ones whom God will approve are those who walk by faith. The rewards are for those who hold the faith even unto death. We must beware of everything that tends to weaken or destroy our faith. The Lord deals graciously and generously with us. He will do for us whatever is right. Knowing this we can have confidence in God, even though the decision of Divine Justice should bar us out of Divine favor. Those whose hearts are right are submissive to the Divine will. The Lord wants us to have a faith that will continue in sorrow and in sunshine; that will trust where it cannot see, that will continue under all the leadings of Divine providence.

COMMUNION WITH CHRIST IN SUFFERING

In Hebrews 10:32-39 the Apostle clearly shows that there are two ways of enduring the afflictions of Christ: (1) to be made a gazing-stock both by afflictions and reproaches, and (2) by avowing our sympathy for the reproached ones and thus sharing their reproaches and afflictions. For if one member suffer, all the members of the Body of Christ suffer with it.

"Call to remembrance the former days," and note that your afflictions and trials came principally after you had been illuminated with the light of the knowledge of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord; and that they have increased as the light of Present Truth has increased with you. It is not difficult to discern the reason for this. The great Adversary is not interested in disturbing those who are "asleep in Zion"; but he is ever on the alert to mislead and entangle those who are awake. And the more active we become in the service of the Lord and the Truth, and, consequently, the more actively opposed to Satan and error, the more he will fight against

us. And the more faithfully and vigorously we fight the good fight, as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, the more we shall have of the Master's approval now, and the greater will be our reward in the Kingdom.

INCREASING SEVERITY OF TRIALS

No doubt there are many and more severe trials just before us. From God's standpoint, having been blest with greater light, we should be able to endure greater trials and afflictions. From Satan's standpoint we, as a Gideon's band, armed with the Truth, are more injurious to his cause than all others combined. The only wonder to us is that he has not assailed us still more fiercely in the past. Perhaps he was hindered; perhaps he will be granted yet more liberty to buffet us, as the night draws on. Such is our expectation, based upon the direct statements and the types of Scripture.

But such reflections should bring us no sadness, no fear; for He that is on our part is more than all that be against us. (I John 4:4; Rom. 8:31.) His promises, as well as His providences, are walls of salvation and protection on every hand. What shall separate us from the love of God in Christ? Shall tribulation? No! it shall but cause us to draw closer to Him; and under His protecting care we shall rest. His grace is sufficient for us. His strength is made manifest in our weakness. When we feel weak in ourselves, then we are strong in Him. He will never leave us nor forsake us.

"Watchman, what of the night?" "The morning cometh, and also the night."--Isa. 21:11,12.

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"ANOTHER VOICE FROM HEAVEN"

"Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."--Rev. 18:4.

THE REVELATION of our Lord to St. John is a Book of signs, in which the things stated symbolize the things meant. To illustrate: In this Book a woman is used to represent a Church--a pure woman a pure Church, a false woman an apostate Church. In Rev. 17:1-6 a picture is given of a false woman, disloyal to her engagement, and therefore no longer worthy to be the Bride of Messiah. This unfaithful woman is branded "Babylon." We read that she sat upon a beast, a symbolic statement of her control of the power at Rome.

In her hand this woman held a golden cup full of abominations, and thus symbolically she is represented as making all nations drunk with the wine of false doctrine.

The cup suggests that the unfaithful Church, symbolized by this woman, had once been the receptacle of Divine Truth--"Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hands." (Jer. 51:7.) In Revelation 17:5 she is called "The Mother of Harlots"--a term suggesting a mother church, and daughter churches which are said to closely resemble the mother. As the mother was called "Babylon," the daughters--so like their mother--bear also the family name.

BABYLON--MOTHER AND DAUGHTERS

All about us we see the fulfilment of this prophecy. We see that the daughter systems have proceeded out of the mother system; that they are all developed from her. In Pittsburgh, some years ago, a very prominent Presbyterian minister said, "Wince as you will, you must admit that this [the Catholic Church] is the Mother Church. She possesses an unbroken history extending back to the times of the Apostles. For every fragment of religious truth which we prize, we are indebted to her as the depository. If she has no claim to being the true Church, then are we bastards and not sons."

A fair examination of the denominations shows that they are more or less in sympathy with the mother system. Revelation 18 traces the history of the Apostate Church and foretells that Babylon--both Papal and Protestant systems--will fall. But the Lord has a true Church, to which He says, "Come out of her, My people!" In other words, the saints of God are scattered throughout the denominations. But now, in the closing of the Age, God sends forth the Message that His people shall no longer remain in the denominations; for the time is coming when the doom of Babylon will be upon her and she will fall.--Isa. 13:1-22.

PROPHECY A GRAPHIC PICTURE OF HISTORY

When we examine the Scriptures with the purpose of understanding prophecy, we find that during the Jewish Age, God made various types and pictures. The Jews themselves were typical. The Scriptures also show that there are two Israels, one of which is to be as the "stars of heaven" and the other as the "sand of the seashore." (Gen. 22:17; Isa. 8:14; I Cor. 10:18; Gal. 6:16.) Natural Israel was used of God to make types of the spiritual things--the "better things." Their Jubilee years were types of the antitypical Jubilee of better times; their Levitical priesthood was a type of the Priesthood in glory, etc.

During the great Babylonian captivity the Jews were compelled to live in Babylon, to be a part of her, to support her, although their bondage was not severe. So today God's people are required to stay in Mystical Babylon, be a part and parcel of Babylon; to support some of her wards and denominations. Therefore it becomes a difficult matter

to flee out of Babylon. But we find in the Scriptures graphic pictures of what is coming upon Mystic Babylon, and those who would escape must flee. As Cyrus, a type of Christ, overthrew Babylon, so a part of the work of the Second Advent will be the overthrow of antitypical Babylon.--Jer. 51:6; Rev. 18:21.

BABYLON THE SYMBOL OF CONFUSION

Originally "Babylon" signified "Gate of God." But the word came subsequently to have the meaning of confusion, mixture; and in this sense it is used in the Revelation. Babylon is a symbol of confusion. God's people in Babylon are dishonored; they are held in restraint. Now, through the prophecy we hear the command, "Come out of her, My people!" This call applies not only to those in Babylon the Great, but to those in other denominations --mother and daughters. "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18:4.) Be not of those who cannot see the errors of Babylon and who, consequently, are not of the called ones.

The object of the call to come out is not for people merely to withdraw from a nominal Church; but whenever any true Christian comes to see the error in which he has been held, and which Babylon has taught, he will see that he will misrepresent not only himself and the denomination to which he belongs, but also the Heavenly Father and the Word of God, if he remains connected with what he sees to be error. As he realizes his position, the voice of the Lord through His Word tells him that he must stand for truth and righteousness.

No one is called out of Babylon until he sees her true condition. So then, never urge anyone to come out of Babylon; for if they have "ears to hear," God's voice tells them plainly to take this step, and gives the reason why they should do so. This Book of Revelation shows us by symbols that dire trouble is coming upon Babylon. The nominal Church claims that Christ's Kingdom was set up hundreds of years ago. Consequently, they are not looking for Christ to come to establish His Kingdom, for they think that He set up His Kingdom at the time of His First Advent.

"GATHER MY SAINTS TOGETHER UNTO ME"

The expression, "Come out of her," signifies that the Lord's people are to separate from all things which are in conflict with the Divine Word. We are to come out of the errors and systems of error which are contrary to the Word of God. But we are not to organize another denomination, for the original call was to membership in the Body of Christ.

"Come out of her, My people," is a call to associate with Christ, with Messiah. This call is given by the Lord through the Prophet when He says, "Gather My

saints together unto Me; those that have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) They were to be gathered, not to the Roman or other systems, but to the Lord, to become one with Him. Therefore they could not be gathered to all these different denominations, nor to any one of them. Those who hear the call should come out of Babylon and take their stand with the Lord. They are no longer to be mis-representatives of God and of themselves.

Those who see these things and have sufficient courage will come out. Those who see these things and lack the courage to come out are more responsible than are the

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majority of people who are in Babylon, but who do not see. If those who see do not have sufficient courage to obey the Lord, they will surely receive of her plagues by remaining in, and will probably have a large share in the punishments of the day of vengeance.

MANY BECOMING IRRELIGIOUS

Many people who have been identified with the different denominations are not coming into the Truth, but are becoming irreligious. They are by no means bad people; and they feel convinced that there has been a great error connected with Christianity. They repudiate much that Babylon does and says. Babylon claims that she has civilized the world; but she forgets that civilization existed before Christianity began. She forgets that Jews are just as civilized as Christians; and that Mohammedans are more temperate than many so-called Christians. By no means do we wish to say anything against whatever good people have received from her. If they get a still further blessing, they will probably find that while the blessing which they previously had was better than a message from heathendom, yet Babylon's best is far inferior to the Truth, the Light.

Dearly beloved, we are permitted to enjoy wonderful things! By the grace of God, we are privileged to see the meaning of things that were once mysterious, not only to us, but to our parents. While some in Babylon are going into infidelity, some out of Babylon are becoming stronger spiritually, entering by hope "into that which is within the veil." If Christ is our Forerunner, we shall enter there with Him. To do so will mean to become partakers of The Messiah, by becoming the Bride of Messiah, as symbolically represented. The true Church is to become associated with Christ in His Kingdom. Then will come the promised blessings to "all the families of the earth."

As we perceive the consistency of the Divine Plan of the Ages, our hearts are full of thanksgiving to God. We see that the New Dispensation will be ushered in with "a Time of Trouble such as never was"; and that this

Time of Trouble is located, among other ways, by that prophecy which tells that "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased"; that there will be a time of trouble; but that "the wise shall understand." From what source do the wise receive their instruction? They will understand according to the wisdom from on high-- in humility accepting the Divine Word and being blessed in so doing.--Dan. 12:4,10.

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WHO MAY FALL FROM GRACE

ONE WHO is down cannot fall. Originally Father Adam was up; that is to say, he was perfect, created in God's likeness, free from sin. He was in God's favor, and while in that condition, he was on trial for life or death. He sinned and fell from favor into disfavor--condemnation, death. His posterity, the whole human race, have been born in God's disfavor. They are fallen. As we read, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psa. 51:5.) By nature mankind are all children of wrath. They cannot fall any further down; for as it is written, "The whole world lieth in the Evil One."--I John 5:19. --Diaglott.

But something occurred which has raised a portion of the race of mankind from the fallen condition. Christ came into the world, gave His life a Ransom-price, and ascended into heaven "to appear in the presence of God." (Heb. 9:24.) Thus far, however, He has appeared only for us, not for the world, but for all those who have trusted in the precious blood of Christ. His appearance for these enables them to approach God, to become disciples of Christ and to receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

This is the attitude in which we stand: we have accepted the Redeemer, we are seeking to walk in His steps, we are lifted up out of condemnation, we are no longer dead in Adam. "You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1,2.) Once we were strangers and foreigners, but having been "made nigh by the blood of Christ" we are now members of the Body of Christ. (Eph. 2:12,13.) So, then, we are children of God by adoption.

After Adam had fallen, he was regarded as an enemy of God. But we have come near to God through Christ. We are "accepted in the Beloved," accounted worthy of life everlasting, if we are faithful; for eternal life is the gift of God. (Eph. 1:6; Rom. 6:23.) The Church, then, have come back from the fallen state; but the world remains in that condition and, therefore, cannot fall. The

only ones who can do so are those who are the recipients of the Holy Spirit.

The manner of life here during the present existence may indeed affect the opportunity and future destiny of the world. If they knowingly violate obligations, they sin against light and they injure their characters; but they cannot sin away their share of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, for they have not yet received that share. Only the consecrated children of God are in the position to do so; as the Apostle points out, "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 to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance."--Heb. 6:4-6.

This thought will well bear repetition: The only class that can fall away are those who have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit; but if any of those who have been brought into full harmony with God, through the begetting of the Holy Spirit, neglect or misuse their blessed privilege, there remains for them no more an interest in the great Atonement; because they have received their portion in Christ's redemptive work.

KNOWLEDGE BRINGS RESPONSIBILITY

The only evidence there is at the present time that we are begotten of the Holy Spirit is the fact that we have "received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Rom. 8:15.) The world, having had no life in them, cannot lose what they never possessed. But as for us, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden the Son of God under foot and hath counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?"--Heb. 10:26-29.

Only those who have been sanctified through the blood of the Covenant can do despite to it. Only those who have a knowledge of the Son of God can "trample Him under foot." The world in its ignorance cannot do these

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things. So, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth" (not if the world sin wilfully, but if we sin wilfully), there remaineth no longer a share for us in the sacrifice of Christ.

For the others, there would still remain their share in the sacrifice of Christ, and their responsibility will be in proportion to their knowledge. We have large responsibility,

because we have large knowledge. We have tasted of the Holy Spirit, we have been made partakers of it. The Apostle says that "those who despised Moses' Law died without mercy." There was nothing more for them then. They did not get eternal torment for disobedience to Moses, but theirs was the death penalty. Those who thus died will, nevertheless, have their share in the redemptive work of Christ.

Those who died under the Law will eventually have an opportunity to receive God's grace in Christ Jesus. But if they were cut off from life under the typical penalty of death, how much more severe would the penalty be upon those who have the understanding and enlightenment through the antitypical Moses--Christ! The intimation of the Scriptures is that such will die the Second Death for wilful disobedience. For such there is no hope of recovery whatever. Let this solemn thought be made emphatic. There will be a recovery from the death by Moses' Law. But for those who die the Second Death, there will be nothing further. They have had their share in the Atonement. They have counted the blood of the Covenant with which they were sealed an unholy thing. "Christ...dieth no more!"--Rom. 6:9.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUND MIND

"God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."--2 Tim. 1:7.

IN THIS TEXT St. Paul is addressing the children of God--those who have left the world, who have turned their backs upon the things of sin and selfishness, who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit because of full consecration to God and to whom the Advocate has imputed His merit. They have received of His Spirit, the new mind, and so have the spirit of a sound mind.

In the beginning of the Gospel Age there were marked manifestations of the Holy Spirit, known as "the gifts of the Spirit" (I Cor. 12:4-11), such as knowledge, healing, miracles, tongues, etc. These gifts were bestowed at that time for two reasons: first, to witness who were God's people; and second, to confirm the faith of the early Church. They were necessary that the Church might have a start, so to speak.

The Apostle says that these miraculous gifts were to continue only for a time, but that the fruits of the spirit were to abide--meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, faith, hope and love, the greatest of all. (I Cor. 13.) The gifts of the Spirit died out with the death of the Apostles and of those also upon whom they had conferred

the gifts. But the fruits and graces remain to this day.

Just as soon as we have been begotten of the Holy Spirit a transforming work begins with us. But in general the reception of the Spirit is at first without marked manifestation. We grow in knowledge, love and all the fruits of the Spirit, in proportion as we have received the Holy Spirit, which is given in order to develop our minds and hearts and to do a transforming work, bringing forth the fruitage of the spirit in our characters and our lives. With some of us the fruitage develops rapidly; with others, slowly.

The grape-vine gives us gifts in that it bears grapes. As fruit-bearing in nature is in one sense of the word a miracle, so also are the fruits and graces of the Spirit which show in our lives, but which are such a gradual development that they do not seem to be miraculous.

The Lord is the true Vine and His true disciples are the branches. The Spirit of the Vine must permeate all the branches, and the fruit of the Vine must appear on every branch. The one thing necessary to remember is that our ultimate blessing and acceptance of the Father depends upon our abiding continually in this blessed relationship of branches in the Vine and our bearing fruit. If we fail to do this, we shall not remain in this relationship. But if we bear the fruits of the Spirit abundantly, we shall some day be branches in the glorified Vine--The Christ of God.

FEAR A FORM OF SELFISHNESS

In our text the Apostle is discussing the character of this Spirit which God has given us. It is not the spirit of fear, not the spirit of dread, not the spirit of timidity. Where the spirit of selfishness goes, there is more or less fear accompanying it. We can realize that with our first parents the spirit of fear led them to hide themselves from the Lord. We recall that Cain feared and fled. (Gen. 3:10; 4:14.) So all down through the ages, the spirit of fear has exerted a powerful influence upon mankind. If a storm comes up, many people act as if they feared that

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it was something sent especially after them.

All fear, being a manifestation of one form of selfishness, is made up of the elements of self-love. People fear lest they may lose some of the things which they selfishly desire to retain. The spirit of many of the heathen as well as of many in Christian lands is a spirit of fear. They are serving God, not from a desire to be co-laborers in His work, but from fear. They have been taught that they ought to go to Church. They know not what God might do to them if they were to neglect to go. Some ministers have said, "If I believed, as you do, that there is no eternal torture, I would do all the wicked things

imaginable." They show by these words that they are not impulsed by a Holy Spirit, but by a spirit of fear, a spirit that belongs to sin. The spirit of fear does not come from God.

There is, of course, a holy fear--a fear to do anything to offend God or to offend a friend. And we ought to be afraid of offending a friend, afraid of hurting or injuring a friend or anybody. If we love our Heavenly Father, we ought to fear to do anything to displease Him.

In Hebrews 4:1 the Apostle says, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Let us not fear evil--but let us fear lest we fail to attain the blessings promised to the overcomers. God will give those blessings only to those who reach a certain development of character. But the fear of the world is wholly improper. If any of the Lord's people have that fear, they have received it from some other source than the spirit of Truth.

TRANSFORMING INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Apostle proceeds to tell us what this Spirit of the Lord has brought to us. It has been a spirit of power, of strength. All who are seeking to walk after the Spirit and have a knowledge of the Lord's love--these He will not

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forsake, but will deliver them from evil. These have a courageous spirit, or influence of mind proceeding from this spirit of power. It gives them such energy that they are able to do more than otherwise they could. They astonish themselves. They have the peace of God to work in them to will and to do His good pleasure.-- Phil. 2:13.

Those who receive the Truth are very different from what they were before they had received its spirit; and as a rule their neighbors and friends discern the change. Where a wife comes to the knowledge of the Truth, her husband is often surprised to find how much more firmness she has for everything that is right. This firmness is not a spirit of arrogance, but a spirit of assurance that God is able and willing to work things together for good. It is the same with the husband. Many wives have seen how much the Truth has strengthened the husband. This change is due to the spirit of power which the Lord has given His people. In proportion as we get this spirit, we get this power. Of course, some characters are naturally strong, but the Truth will make them stronger. Others naturally weak are made so much stronger that they surprise their friends and neighbors.

All who have been in the School of Christ seem to make like development. They become better people than they have ever been before. They are not necessarily better looking, but the Spirit of the Lord helps them to keep their clothes tidy and neat. It helps them to be more

particular as to what they say and how they say it. It influences their words, actions, conduct--everything. It makes them more patient, brotherly-kind. All these qualities are manifested increasingly.

Some who have been a little while in the Lord's service have been remarked upon by others. They say, "These are a very intelligent people. Where did they get their vocabulary? They are not well educated, yet how much they know of affairs in the world! They seem to have a general knowledge of everything." God's Word gives this broad knowledge, and His Spirit gives us power to use this knowledge and to appropriate it to ourselves, for we see it to be the Word of the Lord.

We receive the spirit of love also. The Apostle says that the Spirit of God is the spirit of love, because "God is Love." (I John 4:8.) God's Spirit is God's mind, God's disposition, God's influence. Since God is love, His Spirit must partake of all the qualities which go to make up love.

In proportion to the measure of the Holy Spirit which we have, we shall have love--first, toward God; secondly, to the children of God; thirdly, to our neighbors and friends, and lastly it will extend even to our enemies. It would lead us to be considerate of birds and beasts also. The spirit of love has a generally benevolent influence. Whatever affects the thoughts is sure to affect the words. Whoever has the spirit of love will manifest its influences and will become more loving and more lovable as that spirit increases.

DISREGARD FOR THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS A FORM OF SELFISHNESS

Finally, the Apostle brings in the spirit of a sound mind. Man was created with a well-balanced mind. Adam and Eve did not need an outward record of God's Law. They had the sense of right and wrong so well defined in their minds that they knew right from wrong intuitively. But when they fell, they lost this balance of mind.

As we come down the centuries from their day to ours, we find that this keen sense of right and wrong has become dull. Thus in cannibal lands the inhabitants believe it right to eat each other. They think that if they feed on enemies who are strong, they will be made strong. This utter disregard for the rights of others is the spirit of selfishness. We see this spirit manifested in civilized lands also, where they do not eat up the enemy literally, but eat up his fortune, his reputation.

Our Lord said that while the Pharisees were very particular to give a full tenth of the mint, anise and cummin, yet they had omitted the weightier matters of the Law-- judgment, mercy and faith. He showed that the Law which says, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," is more important than the giving of tithes. He also said that the Pharisees were full of extortion and excess, and that they strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel, that they

devoured widows' houses.--Matt. 23:23-25,14.

By this our Lord meant that when a widow was left alone, with no one to look after her interests, some of these professors of religion would get possession of her property if they could. So in our day there are people who scheme to discover how they can injure their neighbor. They do not eat the persons of their neighbors, but they eat their substance, their property. These people are cannibals in spirit.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUND MIND

In proportion as we get the spirit of love, we get the spirit of a sound mind. This spirit leads us to consider what is right and what is wrong, in all the affairs of life. Not only have we the spirit of the Law, but in addition we have the spirit of the Lord to instruct us. The Law says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." The spirit of the Law says that we shall not permit wealth or anything else to take away our minds from the Lord. We today find people worshipping bonds, stocks, giving the best of their time to the worship of Mammon. They do not know what they are doing.

These people are very well illustrated by Bunyan's picture. You remember that when the pilgrims were in the house of the Interpreter, he took them into a room where there was a man with a muck-rake in his hand, drawing to himself straws, small sticks and the dust of the floor. Above his head was one with a celestial crown in his hand. This crown he proffered to the man in exchange for the muck-rake. But the man neither looked up, nor regarded what was said.

Today we see some who use muck-rakes, gathering all the trinkets of life, not knowing what to do with them after they have been accumulated. When such people die, perhaps these things will be injurious to those to whom they are left. The pilgrims had sound minds, but the man who was raking for sticks and straws and dust had an unsound mind. More or less we see all around us the spirit of an unsound mind, overlooking the things that are really valuable and grasping at trifles.

As we develop the spirit of a sound mind we get to see what things are valuable, and we look at other things as being insignificant. More and more we desire the heavenly things. But the world thinks, "Look at this dust! Is not this fine straw?" or what not. They say, "Get some of these sticks and worm-eaten fruits that we have here." But what they strive for is all illusion.

They say of us that we are of unsound mind because we care for the better things, the heavenly things. So they said of Jesus, "He hath a devil and is mad." (John 10:20.) As the Apostle said, "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God." (2 Cor. 5:13.) Others think it strange that we run not to the same excess of riot. (I Peter 4:4.) And it is true today that whoever will live godly will be misunderstood, slandered. (2 Tim. 3:12.)

But it is for us to show our courage, our faith and our loyalty to the Lord and to manifest His Spirit "of power

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and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7.) The manifestation of His Spirit will help those who are His to become "more than conquerors." (Romans 8:37.) Thus, even if we are not helping the world, we build one another up in our most holy faith.--Jude 20,21.

The spirit of a sound mind is a most wonderful manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the Lord's people. It gives them much advantage every way over the remainder of mankind. It sees in the present life opportunities for the attainment of character. It broadens and deepens the mind along all good lines. It makes one less touchy in respect to his own rights, privileges and preferences, and more considerate of the rights and feelings of others.

The spirit of a sound mind makes one's judgment clearer, truer, more trustworthy than before, for it impels him to accept the instructions of the Word of God in respect to what he should and should not do, and to reject his own faulty judgment. The meek will He guide in judgment. Whatever may be the imperfection of mind and body resulting from the fall, those who receive the spirit of a sound mind are thereby made purer, kinder, gentler, less selfish and more thoughtful in regard to others. Those who are thus rightly exercised will develop the spirit of love increasingly until that which is perfect shall have come and that which is in part shall have been done away. --I Cor. 13:10.

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"IT IS I, BE NOT AFRAID"

--MARK 6:45-56.--OCTOBER 6.--

Text:--"Straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid."--Matt. 14:27.

TODAY'S STUDY shows us how interested people become in anything that will relieve them of sickness and ailments, which cause our race to be, as St. Paul described it, "a groaning creation." The crowds continued to gather wherever Jesus went, partly for hearing, partly from curiosity, and partly because the Message that He gave was one of consolation, comfort, hope. He was not forever blaming them for not keeping the Law, but, on the contrary, He was continually expressing sympathy for them in their weaknesses, and helping them out of them and encouraging them to "go and sin no

more."

After the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus urged His disciples to leave Him and to return to the other side of the Lake. He dismissed the multitude and went into the solitude of the hills for prayer. It is noteworthy that nearly all of the Great Teacher's prayers that are recorded are simple and brief. Whenever He wished to make long prayers He went to the Father alone, by Himself. Undoubtedly this would be a good example for all of His followers to observe. Long prayers are frequently a weariness to the flesh, and so far as we can discern are likely to contain many vain repetitions, or to be attempts to instruct the Lord and counsel Him concerning matters which He understands much better than do any of His children.

WALKING ON THE SEA

The disciples in their fishing boat experienced contrary winds and found the rowing toilsome. In the night they saw what they supposed to be an apparition, a spirit manifestation in human form, walking on the water, and apparently intending to pass by their boat. They cried out, for all saw it and felt troubled. Then they heard a voice saying, "It is I, be not afraid." Jesus got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased, to their amazement, for they had already forgotten the lesson of the previous afternoon--the feeding of the five thousand with the five loaves and two fishes.

In addition to seeing in this a further manifestation of Divine power operating through the Redeemer, we may see a further suggestion of a spiritual lesson. No doubt, after the Master's ascension, the disciples felt themselves very much alone in the midst of a contrary people, and found progress difficult and all of their experiences stormy. No doubt it helped them to look back to this occasion and to remember the Master's ability to come to them on the troubled seas, and how His coming brought peace and quiet.

Thus their hearts may have been led to look for Him who instructed them, "I will never leave nor forsake thee;" and again, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the Age." And this precious lesson still holds good for all who are truly the Lord's people--all who have made a Covenant by sacrifice with the Lord, all who have presented their bodies living sacrifices through the merit of Jesus. He is with them continually, to sanctify to them their deepest distress.

"LORD, SAVE, OR I PERISH!"

St. Matthew gives an additional feature of this lesson not recorded by St. Mark. He tells us that when St. Peter learned that it was Jesus who walked upon the sea, he requested the Lord to sanction his walking on the water to Him. The Lord consented, and St. Peter had the

wonderful courage to make the effort. Had his faith continued, doubtless he would have been sustained, but the Lord's rule with His people seems to be, "According to thy faith be it unto thee." We are not to encourage credulity in ourselves or others, but we are to remember that faith which has a true foundation is very precious in the Lord's sight.

In St. Peter's case it was entirely proper that he should attempt to go to the Lord, because the effort had been sanctioned. It would have been credulity for him to have supposed himself able to walk on the water, without the Lord's sanction and invitation. But when he saw the boisterous waves his faith failed, he began to sink; and then it was that he cried, "Save, or I perish!" How true it is of all God's people that like St. Peter they would like to do some wonderful thing to show their faith in the Lord! And how like St. Peter's are their experiences, often! They would utterly fail did not the Lord interpose for their rescue. However, as the Lord found no

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fault with St. Peter for his effort, we are bound to admire the degree of faith and courage which he manifested.

ST. PETER THE TEACHABLE

Much has been said respecting St. Peter's rashness and the difficulties he repeatedly got into. The criticism is surely to some extent justified, but we are to remember that the Master loved him greatly, partly on account of his zeal, partly on account of the energy which on several occasions got him into difficulty. One thing should always be remembered in his favor, that although he was the oldest of the Apostles he was evidently one of the most meek and most teachable of them all. Of his mistakes he made a mirror, and thus, learning to know himself more particularly, he was safeguarded through the many dangers natural to his temperament; and he stands

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forth in the Scriptures as one of the very noblest of the Apostles. The wisdom of St. Peter's course is illustrated in a little verse published in the New York Sun.

THE THREE FAULT FINDERS

The poem tells that the three fault-finders were provided each with a crystal, to do with as he pleased; and this was the result:

"The fool contrived of his a lens,
Wherein, to gloating eyes,
The smallest blot that could be found
Was magnified in size.

"The just man made of his a pane,
All clear without a flaw;
Nor summer sun nor winter rain
Affected what he saw.

"The wise man pondered long and well
How best to search, to aid,
Then, taking up the crystal given,
Of his a mirror made."

There must have been a great strain continually upon the Great Teacher and Healer, for He was continually expending His vitality in both directions at once. In healing the sick, virtue, or vitality, went out from Him and He healed them all, we read. And all His public teaching cost considerable vitality, especially when He addressed large multitudes. Thus was fulfilled in part the saying of the Prophet respecting Him, "Himself took our sicknesses and bore our infirmities."

Nevertheless, we find Him ever ready, ever alert about the Father's business, and looking after the welfare of, and instructing all who gave evidence of being, or of ever becoming, children of God.

When the ship reached shore in the morning, the people recognized Him and ran round-about that whole region, and began to carry about on beds those that were sick, to where they heard Jesus was. And wheresoever he entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country, they laid the sick in the public places, and besought Him that these might touch if it were but the corner of His garment; "and as many as touched Him were made whole."

The healings which our Lord gave forth during His ministry were physical. As we have already seen, none but Himself had yet received of the Holy Spirit in its begetting power. But did we not hear His word saying, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the Age"? And have not God's consecrated people throughout the past eighteen centuries realized a blessing also--a spiritual blessing--as Jesus passed their way, as they came to a knowledge of Him, as by faith they reached out and touched the hem of His garment, realizing Him to be the Son of the Highest, the Redeemer of the world, the Head of the Church which is His Body, and shortly to be the King of Glory, reigning for the blessing of all the families of the earth?

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GOD'S WORD NOT MAN'S

--OCTOBER 13.--MARK 7:1-13.--

"For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."--Rom. 14:17.

THE STUDY TODAY shows that the Pharisees of eighteen centuries ago, while professing to keep carefully the Divine Law, and while even boasting of faithfulness in this respect, had gradually gotten away from God's Word and become followers of human tradition. It is so with the Jews today. Although they read the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament it is regarded as a sealed Book which they cannot understand; instead of endeavoring to comprehend it they study and shape the course of their lives by the Talmud. The latter admittedly contains both wise and unwise statements, sound and foolish advice; but according to it the orthodox Jews shape all their religious sentiments.

And surely the same is true of Christians today. The Bible is the recognized Authority and Standard, but each denomination of Christians has its own theory, its own proof-texts, its own catechism. When the Bible is read the gloss or interpretation of the accepted creed is before the mind and veils it. Thus it is that with Bibles in our hands and with reverence in our hearts Christians are divided into six hundred different sects, with very little prospect of coming together, because each one insists upon using his own creedal spectacles in the study of the Bible.

If truly wise would not all Christians cast aside and destroy these creed spectacles which have so long separated us, given false coloring to various passages of God's Word and confused our minds in general? Would it not be following Heavenly counsel and Heavenly wisdom to take a different course and to begin a study of the Word of God afresh in the light which shines from one page upon another? We surely will all agree to this theoretically; shall we not put our agreement and resolution into practice?

EATING WITH UNWASHED HANDS

The Pharisees would have liked nothing better than to have had so very able a person as Jesus to be one of their number--to conform to their usages and thus to mark them with His approval. They could not fail to note the lofty character of His teachings along the lines of Justice, Mercy and Love. They could have forgiven Him for some of the truths which He uttered and made them wince, if only He had enforced their formalism. As it was, He really suited nobody. To the impure He was too pure; to those of loud, hypocritical profession He was too sincere; to the worldly-wise He was too frank, too truthful.

In this lesson the Pharisees inquired why the followers of Jesus were not instructed along the lines of the Talmud

--to be very careful to always wash their hands before eating, as a religious duty. We may be sure that Jesus set His followers no example of filthiness or impurity. Indeed, we know that in proportion as truth enters the heart it has a cleansing and purifying effect upon the entire life, upon the whole person--mental, moral and physical. What the Pharisees meant was a ceremonial washing, whether the hands were clean or unclean--to make a formal washing a part of their religion. This was what Jesus objected to. He could not so teach because it would have been ceremonial hypocrisy. As He said on another occasion, These customs of the Pharisees, of wonderful washings of their persons and of the vessels in a perfunctory and ceremonial way, consumed much of their time and were burdensome upon the poor, who had no servants to do these things for them, and not doing them were considered unclean, unholy, out of accord with the Divine arrangements, not true Jews.

Answering the Pharisees on these points, Jesus said to them, You are the holy people mentioned by Isaiah the Prophet saying, "This people seeketh Me with their

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lips, but their heart is far from Me. But in vain do ye worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," for ye leave the commandments of God and hold fast the traditions of men.

Jesus gave them an example of how they neglected the Divine commandments while giving so much attention to ceremonial washings, which were commanded, not of God, but of the Talmud. The illustration was that the Mosaic Law commanded that father and mother should be honored and that he that spoke evil of either of them should be put to death. But this command had been changed by the Talmud and any man might be free from his parents by consecrating himself and substance to God and religious uses. Having done so, according to the Talmud, he was freed from all obligations to his parents. Thus they had made God's direct commandment on this subject null and void, which they had no right to do.

This was the conflict between the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of the Pharisees. Both claimed holiness and strict observance of the Divine Law, but Jesus held to the Word of God and rejected the Talmud, the traditions of the Elders, and the Pharisees neglected the

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Word of God and held to the traditions. What are we as Christians doing today? "Let us hold fast the faithful Word," "The Word of God, which is able to make us wise." Let us search the Scriptures daily and critically, and let us abandon everything which conflicts therewith.

WHAT IS GOD'S KINGDOM?

Our text is frequently misunderstood to mean that God's Kingdom consists in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. The context shows that this is entirely a wrong thought. Let us follow the context and see.

Let us bear in mind what we have already seen respecting the Kingdom mentioned in the Bible--that it is the glorious reign of Messiah for a thousand years, for the uplift of the human family, and that during that reign the Church will be associated with Jesus in His Kingdom glory, power and honor. The call of this Gospel Age is to select this Bride class and to develop them and make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

We have seen that in the present time these called out ones--called to be the "Bride, the Lamb's Wife"--are the Kingdom in embryo or in an undeveloped state. These probationary members of the Kingdom, the Scriptures tell us, are not under the Law of Moses, expressed in the Ten Commandments; they are not hoping for eternal life through them, but they are under Grace--under a gracious arrangement which God has made for them through the merit of Christ's death. St. Paul points out that while these are free from the various commands of the Jewish Law they are not without Law, but under the great Divine Law, as members of the Body of Christ. He says that thus we, as New Creatures, do fulfil the real meaning of the Divine Law when we "walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit," even though we be not able to walk fully up to the spirit of the Law because of weaknesses of our flesh. It is the New Creature, the desire, that is being judged and not the flesh.

Accordingly the Gentiles who came into membership in the Body of Christ were not required to conform themselves to the demands of the Jewish Law. For instance, a Jew, according to the Law, might not eat fish that had no scales, mackerel, etc., neither might he eat rabbit meat, nor pork, etc., and in a variety of other ways he was restrained and limited in his eating and drinking. But none of these restraints apply to Christians who had come from amongst the Gentiles and who never had been under the Law Covenant.

In our text St. Paul urges that these liberties respecting what they might eat and drink were not to be esteemed as the real blessings of this embryo Kingdom class in the present life. Far from it; the real blessings of this class consisted in their enjoyment of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Transformed by the renewing of their minds, they had come to appreciate and love righteousness and truth; good things rather than evil things; pure things rather than impure things; spiritual things rather than earthly things; their citizenship now was in Heaven instead of being an earthly one. They had come to appreciate "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," and its rule in their hearts was one of the grand blessings which they enjoyed as members of

the embryo Kingdom class.

"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

"The wicked are like a troubled sea which cannot rest."

Our heavenly peace and confidence in God are the result of our union with Christ as members of His Kingdom class. This we prize and not specially the privilege of eating pork or some other thing forbidden to the Jews. Joy in the Holy Spirit--fellowship with the Father and with the Son and with all who possess the spirit of righteousness --is the blessed privilege of every member of the embryo Kingdom class, every member of "the Church which is the Body of Christ."

Thus the Apostle would have his hearers place a proper valuation upon the various favors which they had received, so that if the interests of the Lord's cause or the interests of the brethren in Christ should ever require them to forego their liberties in respect to food and drink, they would count such self-denials for Christ's sake and for the brethren's sake as nothing--as sacrifices they could make with joy, because they would not interfere with or disturb in the least the real value of the blessings and privileges which are ours in Christ.

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"A CUP OF COLD WATER"

"The Lord of the Harvest walked forth one day,
Where the fields were white with the ripening wheat,
Where those He had sent in the early morn
Were reaping the grain in the noonday heat.
He had chosen a place for every one,
And bidden them work till the day was done.

"Apart from the others, with troubled voice,
Spake one who had gathered no golden grain:
'The Master hath given no work to me,
And my coming hither hath been in vain;
The reapers with gladness and song will come,
But no sheaves will be mine in the harvest home.'

"He heard the complaint, and He called her name:
'Dear child, why standest thou idle here?
Go fill the cup from the hillside stream,
And bring it to those who are toiling near;
I will bless thy labor, and it shall be
Kept in remembrance as done for Me.'

"'Twas a little service, but grateful hearts
Thanked God for the water so cold and clear;
And some who were fainting with thirst and heat,
Went forth with new strength to the work so dear;
And many a weary soul looked up,
Revived and cheered by the little cup."

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In view of the world-wide discussion of the "Hell-fire and Brimstone" question, as a result of the public repudiation of certain erroneous ideas connected with that subject by the I.B.S.A. in recent convention at Washington, D.C., a special edition of the PEOPLES PULPIT, Vol. IV, No. 7, has been

prepared. It consists mainly of press comments and expressions from eminent clergymen, Catholic and Protestant, respecting the I.B.S.A. Anti-hell-fire Resolution. A large quantity of said issue is now being printed for general use as a supplementary volunteer number for this year. We would not discourage the output of our regular volunteer edition, but believe this to be an opportune time to immediately cover again your territory with this "Hell-fire and Brimstone" edition. Order freely as many as you can judiciously use--AND AT ONCE.

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BETHEL HYMNS FOR OCTOBER

After the close of the hymn the Bethel Family listens to the reading of "My Vow Unto the Lord," then joins in prayer. At the breakfast table the MANNA text is considered. Hymns for October follow: (1) 7; (2) 101; (3) 12; (4) 277; (5) 167; (6) 310; (7) 296; (8) 141; (9) 229; (10) 222; (11) 230; (12) 258; (13) 47; (14) 259; (15) 252; (16) 245; (17) 313; (18) 303; (19) 93; (20) 85; (21) 144; (22) 337; (23) 135; (24) 209; (25) 136; (26) 145; (27) 299; (28) 13; (29) 208; (30) 273; (31) 53.

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying."--Romans 13:12,13.

THE SCRIPTURES call attention to the fact that there is a night of weeping in contrast with a day of joy. (Psa. 30:5.) The "night" is that period of darkness which set in after Adam fell. By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as the result of sin. (Romans 5:12,19.) Evil has brought sorrow and the darkness of ignorance and superstition among mankind until human affairs have become demoralized. As the Prophet Isaiah says, "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."--Isa. 60:2.

There is however a morning promised. That morning is to be ushered in by the Sun of Righteousness, rising with healing in His beams. (Mal. 4:2.) That Sun of Righteousness is Christ and the Church with Him. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43)--Christ as the Head and the Church, which is His Body.

Another Scripture speaks of the present as daytime: "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." (John 9:4.) While for many centuries there has been a period of darkness, nevertheless since the First Advent of our Lord the glorious light of Truth has had more effect upon the world than at any previous time; for with the coming of our Lord Jesus a blessing came upon the world. At that time so much light came in, that the Gospel Age may be called day in contrast with previous experiences. This day, in turn, gave place to a long period known as the Dark Ages. Then, since the Reformation, a measure of light came in again, through certain influences which have brought blessings to the Lord's people. Now it is time for the Sun of Righteousness to rise with healing in His beams.

"THE MORNING COMETH"

We believe that the day is actually at hand; that we are living in the early dawn of a New Dispensation, and that as soon as the Harvest of the Gospel Age shall have been garnered, "the kingdoms of this world" shall, during a great time of trouble, "become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."--Rev. 11:15.

The Scriptures inform us that the period of time during which the present dominion of Satan shall become the Kingdom of God's dear Son, will be a specially evil day. It will be a season in which all the children of

light shall be crucially tested; a day that will try every man's faith and work; a day of fiery trial through which only "the gold, the silver and the precious stones" will pass unharmed and in which all the "wood, hay and stubble" of error, sin and human tradition will be entirely consumed.--I Cor. 3:12,13; I Pet. 4:12.

"AND ALSO THE NIGHT"

While we observe the glorious dawn of the New Dispensation, we notice clouds also. The Bible forewarns us that before the Kingdom of Heaven shall have been set up fully there will be a very dark hour for the world --a period in which sin will have great liberty in its operation, and during which the saints of God will suffer persecution. At the same time we can see the reflection from the "Sun," although it has not yet arisen; we are now in the early dawn. But the coming darkness will make matters appear as though the morning will not come, as though the night had again set in, as though the Divine recognition of all things had ceased.

There is, however, a silver lining to the clouds. Soon the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His beams. The Church in glory with her Lord will put down sin, will dispel the superstition and evil which now becloud the minds of men and will give clear light to the people respecting God and His Word. "I will turn a pure language [Message] to the people, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent." (Zeph. 3:9.) The Message was originally given in its purity, but this freedom from adulteration it did not retain. It has been more or less obscured by ignorance and superstition. When through Messiah's Kingdom the Lord shall make His Message pure and plain to mankind, then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. Those who refuse, however, to develop heart-loyalty to the Kingdom shall die the Second Death.-- Isa. 45:23; Acts 3:23.

While the day has not yet come, there are those who Scripturally are called children of the light (I Thess. 5:5), and who do not belong to the realm of sin. We who are of this class have laid down our lives in consecration for the purpose of becoming servants of righteousness. We are in harmony with God and are enemies of sin. We have been begotten of the Holy Spirit to the new nature and are promised joint-heirship with our Lord in the future. Let us, then, who are of the day,

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cast off superstition and ignorance--the works of darkness --and put on the armor of light.--Rom. 13:12.

ARISE AND SHINE IN LIGHT ETERNAL

What, then, is the Christian's duty throughout this

period of darkness? Shall we live in sin while our hearts are in harmony with righteousness? The Apostle says we must not live in sin. (Rom. 6:15.) Let us put off everything which we think will be displeasing to the Lord, everything that is contrary to the light of the New Day--the light which we have seen, but which the world has not seen. Let us put on the full "armor of light," the "whole armor of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day." And putting it on let us remember that it is not a useless weight, but a necessary protection in battle.--Rom. 13:12; Eph. 6:13.

No man ever puts on armor unless he expects to fight. If he is a soldier of the Cross, the "Sword of the Spirit" is the great weapon with which he will prove his loyalty and strength. The brethren should build each other up in the most holy faith, fighting the good fight and showing their loyalty to the Lord and to the Truth. (Jude 20; I Tim. 6:12.) Those who succumb to the influences of darkness show themselves unworthy of the new order of things, and they may not expect to be sharers with Christ in His Kingdom, but to be amongst those rejected of the Lord as unworthy.

Let us remember that we are well along in the hour of temptation which was promised to come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. (Rev. 3:10.) Higher Criticism, Evolution, Christian Science, Hypnotism, New Thought, Mind Cures and other works of darkness are casting a deep shadow over all who are not fully consecrated to the Lord and who therefore are not kept by His power, through His Word and His providences.

"WALK HONESTLY AS IN THE DAY"

While we are not yet fully in the Day, yet we belong to the New Dispensation, and therefore should live as nearly as possible in accordance with the perfect standard of the future. So to live will imply that we shall be misunderstood by the world; that we shall be thought foolish; and that we shall be considered enemies, not only by those in gross darkness, but particularly by those who, professing to be the Lord's people, really prefer darkness to light, error to truth.

We are inclined to lay special stress upon the word honestly, for we believe that the Apostle used it advisedly and in a special sense. As we look about us we find that dishonesty is very prevalent, not only in the world, where we expect a certain amount of duplicity, misrepresentation, deception and hypocrisy, but even among professing Christians.

Every true child of God should see to it that he is honest, not only in money matters, but in his treatment of his neighbors and his brethren in the Church, and above all, in his confessions respecting his faith. The test is being made along this line, and those who love the favor of men rather than the favor of God will be given opportunity to prove that they are unfit for the

Kingdom, whatever else they may be fit for. The Apostle tells us (2 Thess. 2:11) when speaking of this evil day, that God will send strong delusions that a certain class may believe a lie, because they were not honest, but acted deceptively, hypocritically.

HONESTY THE BASIS OF CHARACTER

Probably the most valuable trait of character is honesty. Where there is little honesty, there is little character; where there is great honesty, there is great character. We mean not merely honesty as to dollars and cents, pounds and shillings, but as to the very thoughts and intents of our hearts, as well as to our words.

We should always endeavor to do to others as we would that they should do to us, and not to retaliate. At the First Advent the principal charge which our Lord made against the religious teachers of His day was that they made great professions of holiness, when, as a matter of fact, they were not holy. He said that they devoured widows' houses--not that they literally ate the houses, but that they tried to get possession of the property because of the more or less defenseless position of widows. At that time widows and orphans were not protected as in our day. Consequently they fell an easy prey to the greed of those whose professions of godliness should have protected the weak and helpless.

Probably our Lord would denounce a great deal of the wisdom of today as He did of that day. But we have not the ability to read the heart and therefore cannot speak as positively as He did. In respect to the great ministers of today, however, we readily see that some of them hold their positions under false pretenses. They profess to receive their salaries as ministers of Christ, when they do not believe in the Bible at all. Some of them have written to us that they are in great trouble; that, realizing their position, they would like to get out of it, but they cannot easily get another position as desirable as their present one; and so they are dishonest enough to keep their charges.

The Apostle says, "Let us walk honestly." Let us take our proper stand for the Truth. While we should always speak the Truth in love, whether to our enemies or to our friends, while we should always have consideration for the opinion of others, yet we should take our stand firmly. We doubt that the Lord would care to take into the Kingdom any who are not honest. We fear, therefore, that those who have high positions are "deceiving and being deceived." (2 Tim. 3:13.) There is such a thing as deceiving one's self by repeating a sentiment until one believes it.

The lesson to us is that, however others may walk, we must see to it that we "walk honestly as in the day" (Rom. 13:13), as though we were living in the broad daylight, so that if the world understood all about any

transaction of ours they would realize that we are honest --even as the Lord understands all about it. Any other course is dangerous and is not "walking as in the day." --John 11:9.

QUALITIES INJURIOUS TO THE BODY OF CHRIST

The translators of the Bible seemed to forget that the Epistles were written "to the saints" (see dedication of the various Epistles), and not to the world; hence when mentioning certain sins they used English words which are applicable to the crimes of the most depraved class of people, instead of using such language as would properly represent the misdemeanors that might be expected amongst saints. In urging the Lord's people to avoid chambering and wantonness, etc., we are not to understand the Apostle to mean the wickedness practised by the most depraved and benighted of the children of the world. Rather, we understand him to address the words to saints, urging them to continence in their social relations, that the thoughts of the Kingdom should lift their minds to a large extent from the earthly affections.

By the general rules of language St. Paul would not begin his argument with the grosser sins and end with the

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less, but reversely he would conclude with the stronger, as evidently he does in enumerating the list of sins given in verse 13 of our text. Here he concludes with the exhortation that the saints, in walking as in the day, should avoid strife and envy. The other difficulties would be comparatively their own affair and might do no injury to others. But strife and envy are two qualities that indicate a wrong condition of heart on the part of the transgressor that would eventually bar him from the Kingdom.

Be it noted carefully that the various dispositions mentioned in verse 13--rioting, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, strife and envy--result from being intoxicated with the spirit of the world. Carelessness of life in any of the earthly affairs, and lack of self-restraint in the connubial relationship are very liable to go hand in hand with a wrong spirit in the Church--a spirit of strife, contention, wilfulness, not submitting to the Divine Word and providence, but on the contrary, arousing jealousy and ambition on behalf of self or others, for prominence in the Body.

SOBRIETY COMMENDABLE

We yield to none in our opposition to intoxicating beverages and in abhorrence of the terrible results which they entail. No saint should ever be intoxicated. The Word of God says that no drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of God. (I Cor. 6:10.) The Scriptures do not

say that a moderate use of liquor brings woe, sorrow, redness of eyes, etc., and we are not to add to their words. But we do well to remember that "They that tarry long at the wine" probably reached that condition through habit, and that most of such began the use of liquor with the intention of becoming moderate drinkers only.-- Prov. 23:30.

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Beware of the slavery of habit! Even the force of the "exceeding great and precious promises" is not sufficient to hold in check our fallen appetites when they are constantly being fed and the chains of habit are being forged. Surely the new nature cannot thrive under conditions which deprave even the old nature! Let every New Creature resist faithfully the seductive influences of evil, if he would make his calling and election sure to the Kingdom.

There is a marked contrast between the spirit and sentiment of the world and that of a true Christian. With the world there is a general tendency to indulge at times in a little revelry, and with many of them there is a decided inclination toward drunkenness. Even among the abstemious there is a feeling that an occasional drink is not only permissible, but quite necessary.

The Christian, however, has set before him the high standard of a sound mind, with meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love. The more a Christian possesses the spirit of righteousness, the Holy Spirit, the more he realizes that he has passed from darkness into light. The Divine standard is to be his viewpoint always. Instead of looking forward to revelry, he is rather to turn away with regret that any such conditions prevail among mankind. The world considers the use of liquor to be proper if not too frequently indulged in. The Christian, on the contrary, considers drunkenness and revelry to be improper and to be resisted so far as he and his influence are concerned.

The Christian is to display increasingly the spirit of true holiness. The Apostle says, "Let your moderation be known of all men." (Phil. 4:5.) The very promises made to us in the Scriptures tend to make us sober. Our God is most gracious!

"What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Hence anything that might lead our steps away from the spirit of holiness is to be regarded as something pernicious, for it might cost us Divine favor, our eternal life and a share in the Kingdom.

The world, on the contrary, have no such incentive to influence them. It is their custom to indulge in just as much revelry as would not be too seriously disapproved by society. Banquets are given for the very purpose of

having a so-called "good time." When worldly people get together there is a general tendency to revelry and a certain amount of looseness. All this has a demoralizing effect upon society.

THE TRUTH A RESTRAINING INFLUENCE

The Christian has a restraining influence which is unknown to the world. Not only does he wish to have the approval of his neighbors, but more than all he desires the still higher standard of Divine approval; for he is on trial before the Lord Himself as to his manner of life. Hence, with him there is a principle to help him to shun rioting, drunkenness, reveling or similar conditions. The Apostle Paul admonishes the Christian to make straight paths for his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. (Heb. 12:13.) For instance, if a man have an appetite for liquor, he should avoid everything that would tend to arouse that appetite. Thus he would make "straight paths for his feet," that he might walk pleasing to the Lord.

The Lord does not deal with His people along the lines of commands. In His Word He sets the standard of a sound mind, not only in respect to revelry and the use of liquor, but to all manner of conduct. Those who love Him will strive to attain that standard. Whether therefore we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we should do all to the glory of God. (I Cor. 10:31.) But we find that Christians called out from the world need to learn and to develop true character. At first they think nothing of what subsequently they would consider grievous error. As the Christian grows in knowledge and in love toward his fellow-men, he learns to measure things more carefully by the Divine standard. So we find that those who have been Christians for a long time show good judgment in respect to everything in life. They use the spirit of a sound mind, which is the most desirable thing in the world.--2 Tim. 1:7.

The Christian has before him high standards and the hope of the high reward of association with Christ in the Kingdom. We are glad to note that with the centuries there has developed a tendency toward morality and all the good things of life. And although there is much corruption below the surface of society, yet there is something which keeps that surface comparatively smooth, whatever may be below it.

When we compare civilization with heathendom, we do not find much more evidence of self-control in the former than in the latter. The heathen live as have their ancestors for centuries, with very little rioting and drunkenness of any kind. In a journey around the world we saw only two intoxicated men, except in what we call civilized, or Christian lands. The vast majority of heathen are temperate. Mohammedanism has done a great deal for mankind in respect to temperance. So has Buddhism. In one city we met a Christian brother

who told us that he was a temperance missionary. When questioned as to his mission, he replied, "Oh, amongst those who accept Christianity there is much more need

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for temperance work than amongst others! I am spending my life in this way."

PLAIN LIVING AND HIGH THINKING

In all parts of the world it is customary to use liquor in the so-called "upper strata" of society. At hotels abroad nearly every person at the table is supplied with liquor. On the steamers the use of liquor is so customary that to ask for water is enough to create a sensation among the waiters. We are greatly blessed in America in that alcoholic beverages are held in disapprobation, although a great deal is used here in social circles. Liquor is justly regarded with opprobrium, for it is doing a great deal of harm and should be frowned down.

Christians are not to walk in reveling, nor in drunkenness, nor in rioting, but are to live on a high intellectual and moral plane. We are not to take pleasure merely in the animal appetites--in food, drink, etc.--but we are to live the higher life from our knowledge of God and His Plan and of all things that pertain to our welfare. This course should include also a sanity and sobriety of mind in regard to religious matters.

The great "harlot" pictured in the Revelation (17:4,5), has in her hand a cup, in which there is the wine of false doctrine, intoxicating the people who drink it. This drunkenness is upon all; but we are gradually emerging from its intoxicating effects. The hobgoblins that we saw when we were under its influence are disappearing, and sanity is returning to us. Now we have more pleasure in the Lord, more of the spirit of a sound mind. The Lord's people should be moderate, not only in respect to the temporal food and drink, but also the spiritual. Whoever finds it wise to be careful in the one, finds it best to be careful in the other. Whatever doctrine is not based upon the Word of God is to be rejected. "To the Law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."--Isa. 8:20.

WORLDLY WISDOM NOT LIGHT

From the Divine standpoint there are two great principles in operation--right and wrong, light and darkness. All the children of God, so far as they have received the Holy Spirit of begetting, are children of light. The world's condition is not that of light, but of darkness. (Eph. 5:8; I Thess. 5:5.) There are different shades of darkness, however. The Scriptures declare that "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people";

"The darkness hateth the light"; "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own"; "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."-- Isa. 60:2; John 15:19; Matt. 5:16.

Neither the philosophies of men nor their moral sentiments are light. The true light cometh down from above; and only those who are begotten of the Spirit of the Lord have that light. To these, old things have passed away and all things have become new. (2 Cor. 5:17.) The elements of darkness that reign in our mortal bodies are to be discouraged and to be expelled therefrom. The clause, "If the light that is in thee become darkness," refers only to the Church class and means, If the light of the Holy Spirit of our begetting become extinguished, how great will be that darkness!--Matt. 6:23.

When the Apostle says, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30), he evidently is warning us against losing the light that has illumined us--the Spirit of our adoption. The caution, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit," implies that it will not leave suddenly without being grieved. We can readily see that little things may be the entering wedge in the displacement of the Spirit.

SELFISHNESS LEADS INTO DARKNESS

"Love is the fulfilling of the Law." (Rom. 13:10.) We who are in Christ Jesus have the righteousness of the Law fulfilled in us, because we are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. 8:4.) The fulfilment of the Law is love supreme for God and love for our neighbor as for ourselves. Everything in the nature of selfishness tends to displace love. Selfishness in its various forms is the work of the Devil. Selfish ambitions have a distracting influence and in time will remove

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us from the Lord. The Apostle mentions as branches coming out of this root of selfishness, anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife--all of which are works of the flesh and the Devil, in contrast to the fruits of the Spirit, which are meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, and love.--Gal. 5:22,23.

To whatever extent those begotten of the Holy Spirit as dear children of God allow that Spirit to be displaced in their hearts by an evil spirit, to that extent darkness comes in. A little anger dispossesses a proportionate amount of love; a little envy, jealousy or contention is very injurious. Love cannot dwell where strife is found. Whoever, therefore, having received the Spirit of the Lord, allows a wrong spirit of the flesh to return and to displace the Spirit of the New Creature, will in that proportion go into darkness.

This darkness will not only cause the person to become

more quarrelsome in disposition, but will affect him also in respect to his spiritual vision. As the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit gives him a better knowledge of the deep things of God, so, in proportion as this Spirit is lost, the knowledge of the deep things will vanish, until there will be gross darkness. The individual will then be in the same condition as the world in respect to spiritual things. No matter what he once knew and saw, he will not henceforth be able to understand these things; for "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him."--reverence Him. (Psa. 25:14.) To whatever extent we lose the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of love, loyalty and obedience, to that extent we lose its illumination.

The Apostle Paul speaks of the "Mystery," which is explained as the peculiar relationship existing between Christ and the Church. (Eph. 3:3-6.) No one can appreciate this Mystery unless he is begotten of the Holy Spirit. If one loses the Spirit of his begetting and goes into darkness, how great is that darkness! He loses all knowledge of that Mystery.--Matt. 6:23.

Perhaps all have noticed that we may sit in a room dimly lighted and not particularly heed the darkness. But if we go to an adjoining room which is brilliantly lighted, and then re-enter the dimly lighted room, it will seem darker than when we left it. For a time at least we cannot see anything. The eye must become accustomed to darkness gradually. So it is with those who receive the light of Truth and afterwards lose it. They seem to go into grosser darkness than before they had the light.

CHRISTIAN STANDARD VERY HIGH

In the heathen world there is gross darkness. With every step of civilization comes a clearer view of the difference between right and wrong, and a general progress toward the right. Sometimes we find people in the world who have not been begotten of the Holy Spirit and who, not having the light in them, are still in darkness, but who try to regulate their conduct by certain principles. They say, "This is right and that is wrong. We

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will do this, but not that." They make rules of righteousness for themselves, although they are not willing to live up to the drastic laws which the Lord has established as His standard. They say, "We will do what the majority of people think is right." These people form a moral code of their own, based upon what others think. They have no standard other than public opinion. Wherever they go they practise what the majority of their neighbors think to be right.

But the Christian takes the extreme view which God sets before him--full consecration unto death. He is considered an extremist, a fanatic, by the world who

hate his course and think it foolish. They say, "You Christians raise the standard too high. We are willing to live up to the standard of the majority in our community, but not to yours. You have such peculiar views."

The Lord's people gauge their views, not by what others think, but by what the Word of God teaches. They say, "To my Lord I must be true." To everything else they decline to conform. Thus they are led by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Love, which actuates them. But if this Spirit be extinguished, a mind once under its control will be in a worse condition than that of a worldly mind; for the latter, not having the special direction of the Lord's Spirit, has for its standard the opinion of others. The Lord's people have lost the fear of man, and if they lose also the mind of the Lord, they have no fixed principle to govern their course. Then their natural disposition will assert itself; and the light in them having become darkness, "how great is that darkness!"

St. Paul tells us (Heb. 6:4-6), that "It is impossible ...to renew again to repentance" any who are wilful sinners against full light and knowledge. These have committed the "sin unto death"--the Second Death --from which there will be no recovery.--I John 5:16.

Let us then, while rejoicing in Divine favor, see to it that we act circumspectly. Our walk in life is not to be "after the flesh," which leads more or less directly to death, but "after the Spirit," which leads to everlasting life with our Great Redeemer. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification."--I Thess. 4:3.

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THE NEW CREATURE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO DIVINE LAW

PART II--EXPERIENCE OF THE NEW CREATURE EDUCATIONAL

THE NEW CREATURE is represented by the will, the mind; but there can be no New Creature without a body. God does not give the New Creature its own body in the present life, but permits it to practise on the old body. And according to the New Creature's faithfulness in the old body will be its reward--either as a member of the Little Flock or of the Great Company or--for unfaithfulness, its punishment, Second Death.

The New Creature owns the mortal body, possesses that body. The body is not the New Creature's body except in a possessive sense. If one were living in a cabin temporarily while his house is being built, and someone else were to ask, "Is that your house?" he would say, "No; I am staying here merely until my house is built." So the New Creature occupies the old body. That body

is dead because it has been devoted to God in connection with the Sin-offering.--Col. 3:3; Gal. 2:20.

The Lord knoweth our frame. He knows that we are all fallen, imperfect--mentally, morally, physically. His message to the New Creature is, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.) This means perfection of will, of intent, of endeavor. But God knows that we have this treasure of the new will in a mortal body, which is imperfect. Through Christ He has made provision that every imperfection of our flesh may be forgiven on condition that we come to Him for that forgiveness in the name of our Advocate, Jesus. This arrangement is to our advantage, for it leads us to watch the more carefully in respect to our trespasses and to note the more carefully that they cannot be forgiven except through the merit of our Redeemer.

THREE BLESSINGS RESULTING FROM FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE

The experience of the New Creature in coming to the Throne of Grace for help is, therefore, educational. It will strive the more diligently, the more earnestly, the more perseveringly, to live according to the will of God, not only in mind, but also in body. The result of faithfully

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following this course of daily scrutinizing our thoughts and words and doings must be the strengthening, the fortifying of the New Creature against the wiles of the world, the flesh and the Adversary.

Additionally, this course must mean not only a higher and nobler earthly life, even though still imperfect, but a great sympathy for others of the human family and for the Church, who similarly strive against the weaknesses of heredity in the flesh, and also a general enlightenment of the heart sympathetically toward the members of the human family--born in sin, "shapen in iniquity." It must mean thus much of preparation for the future Kingdom --for helping poor humanity up out of the degradation of sin and death.

CAUSES OF SPIRITUAL DECLINE

Although the New Creature cannot consent to sin, cannot sin wilfully, cannot sin with deliberation, and still be a holy mind, it can become slack, careless, inattentive, overcharged with the cares of this life--not sufficiently loyal and alert to fight against the Great Enemy. In this condition it may become more or less stupefied, while the will of the flesh may gain the ascendancy in some particular. The flesh has its cravings, its demands; and it has a plausible way of urging what it thinks to be its rights and privileges. Sometimes the flesh is very persistent along these lines.

If the New Creature become overcharged, become weak through a failure to eat the strengthening food which the Father has provided, it may be almost helpless for a time, until at last it becomes non-resistant to sin. To whatever extent the New Creature is to blame for this condition, it will receive stripes, not merely as a matter of justice, but also as a matter of correction, for if it were not corrected it might go on to greater carelessness as to its responsibilities.

We all need to be disciplined in order that we may stand firm for the principles of righteousness. To whatever extent the New Creature fails to resist the flesh, there will be stripes, punishment of some kind, retribution. But even when those punishments come, there will be also manifestations of the Lord's favor.

The experiences of the Prophet David were not altogether like those of the saints, for he was on a different plane from us. But we may apply the general principles

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deduced from his experiences. David sinned and the Lord allowed certain chastisements to come upon him. David was contrite and asked forgiveness for those sins. Although he had the light of the Lord's favor, yet the Lord declared that he must be punished for doing those things which he knew were wrong, even though all the while his heart was set on the Lord. The after experiences of the man proved his contrition. He committed sin; he repented; he was forgiven; he was restored to the Lord's favor. Yet in due time he received chastisements for those very sins; and when he received those chastisements, he recognized that they were a just recompense of punishment upon him.

STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WILFUL SIN

Inattention or carelessness on the part of the New Creature does not necessarily mean the Second Death, unless that carelessness went to the extent of intelligent choice of sin--wilful sin. The wilful sinner cuts himself off entirely from Divine favor and lapses into the condition of condemnation to death, out of which he had been lifted. Of this the Apostle speaks, saying, "We are not of those who draw back unto perdition," destruction--Second Death. Furthermore, it should be noted that none ever steps suddenly from loyalty to disloyalty to God and to righteousness.

Wilful sin coming upon the New Creature destroys him so gradually that he seems not to be conscious of its development at the time. First, the wish, the desire, the pride or the ambition develops; he is not submissive to the Divine will. Later on, an attempt is made to acquire the gratification of the pride of life, the lust of the eye and of the flesh and a corresponding neglect of the heavenly things--of the hope set before us in the Scriptures

and of the Covenant of sacrifice which we have made.

A later development of this wrong spirit by and by finds opportunity, under one pretext or another, to put the person into opposition to the Lord, to the truth and to the brethren. He thus gradually passes from being a soldier under the banner of Christ to becoming a co-laborer with the Adversary in opposing the things of God.

As the Apostle says, "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" (James 3:5.) Behold what a great destruction of all the work of grace may be accomplished speedily by a little pride or fond desire or self-gratification! --not that the little beginnings mean the Second Death, but that they will surely lead on toward it unless the individual be recovered. St. James emphasized this thought, saying, "When lust [desire] has conceived, it bringeth forth Sin; and Sin when it is finished [completed] bringeth forth Death."--James 1:15.

THREE METHODS OF ADMONITION USED BY THE LORD

Meantime, while one of the Lord's sheep would be thus straying, would the Great Shepherd be inattentive and allow him to wander without warning? Surely not! Through some Divine providence, such as sickness or the coming to the attention of some message from God's Word, directly or indirectly, or through faithful testimony and witness of the brethren, the Lord will speak to all such straying sheep, pointing out to them the danger of the path they are taking. If they heed well, they shall be recovered fully, and ultimately attain to the highest state as overcomers. But the Lord will not coerce.

In the beginning the Lord appealed to our wills, and He continues to do so. The Lord will not use force in the selection of the present time; for He seeketh only such to serve Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth. The same will which He accepted and which brought us such great blessing can reject God's favors--can receive the grace of God in vain and gradually draw back out of fellowship with the Lord and with the spirit of the Covenant and toward the Second Death.

If the admonitions of the Lord's providences, including the counsel of the brethren, etc., fail, and if there be a measure of ignorance connected with the perverse course, the Lord may give severe chastisements to awaken thoroughly such a person, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, through those chastisements. (I Cor. 5:5.) Many such, the Scriptures assure us, will come up out of great tribulation, washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7:14.) But while they may attain to a good position on the spirit plane, they have lost the great, pre-eminent prize of joint-heirship with the Lord in the Messianic Kingdom, unto which they were called.

ALLOWANCE MADE FOR IMMATUREITY OF CHARACTER

It seems to be a correct principle, however, that a person begotten of the Holy Spirit, who had not yet developed strength of character sufficient to qualify him to be a child of God on the heavenly plane, would not have judgment passed upon him until he had enjoyed the opportunity of coming to a knowledge of Present Truth and of demonstrating his loyalty.

This thought seems to be borne out by the Apostle in Hebrews 6:4-6. There, where he says in substance, If those who have tasted of the good Word of God and been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, shall fall away, it will be impossible to renew them, he implies that those who have not had this opportunity for development are not responsible to such an extent and would not be liable to the Second Death. If a babe had done something worthy of stripes, he would be treated according to his infancy. The Apostle Peter says, "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby."--I Peter 2:2.

These texts seem to suggest a process of development. If one made his consecration today, he would not be counted worthy of the Kingdom today; for only through trials and tribulations shall he become worthy. A certain period of probation would be granted to him, an opportunity to make good his covenant of sacrifice. Then if he failed to make good that covenant of sacrifice, he would be responsible in one of the two ways, as we have seen; either he would receive chastisements of the Lord which would bring him to a realization of his privileges, or if wholly unworthy of God, he would go into the Second Death. Anyone becoming a Christian will have a long enough time in which to make his calling and election sure, if he so run in the race as to obtain.

SELF-IMPOSED DISCIPLINE RECOMMENDED

Sometimes God's people, appreciating their own weaknesses, the blemishes of their flesh, properly feel themselves unworthy of the glorious things which God has in reservation for the Elect. It is their duty to do the best in their power, but not to attempt to judge, to decide their own cases. There is One that judgeth them, even God. Whatever the sin, whatever the circumstances, it should be taken promptly to the Throne of Heavenly Grace in the name of Jesus, to obtain the mercy of God provided thus, and to find increasing help for future times of need.

We must not become discouraged and lose faith and hope, even though obliged to come to that Throne, repentantly, seventy times seven times. To whatever extent, however, the sin be repeated as the result of earthly

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weakness of heredity, to that extent there is forgiveness, in the Divine arrangement. But to whatever extent the sin contained a measure of wilfulness, or to whatever

extent we failed to use our knowledge and ability to resist it, to that extent the New Creature will be held responsible, and will have certain chastisements imposed. Happy are those people who seek to punish themselves by some discipline, such as fasting. The Apostle says, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" [chastened of the Lord].--I Cor. 11:31,32.

We should all keep in memory, however, the fact that God expects of us a demonstration of loyalty to Him and to the principles of Truth and Righteousness--in an overcoming degree. It will not do simply to stand still from week to week and from year to year and to say, "These are my weaknesses and I take them to Jesus." Overcoming is the gaining of some victory by the New Creature over besetting weaknesses as well as over trespasses. Only such as strive will be crowned and acknowledged of the Lord as overcomers. And their overcoming will be, not of themselves, but of God's grace and the assistance of the Great Advocate.--I John 5:4.

THE NEW CREATURE'S RIGHT TO LIFE

From the time that we become New Creatures in Christ, a right to life on the spirit plane is given us, just as a right to life on the human plane was granted to Adam when he was created. But as he lost that right to life by disobedience to God, so we, as New Creatures, if we sin wilfully, would forfeit that right to live, and we could not be redeemed again, for "Christ dieth no more." (Rom. 6:9.) Those who really accept God's proposition as laid down, heartily consecrate themselves, have passed from death to life, and the Apostle says that these are alive.

That right to life, according to the Divine record, is a very different matter from anything we had before. Formerly, we had a right to die. Since we became New Creatures we have a right to live, unless we take some adverse step. Therefore, it is a very different thing with the Church from what it is with mankind. The world will gain the right to life under the opportunities offered to them during the thousand years of Christ's reign. We have that right to live now. Our "life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:3.) Men can kill the body, but no man can take from us the right to live. Our eternal life has already begun in a sense. We are on trial now, and if we pass the trial successfully, we shall forever possess that right to life.

Not so with the world. There is no provision by which the world has a right to life. "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (Rev. 20:5.) Therefore the Church gets eternal life at least a thousand years before the world will be given the right to everlasting life; it is ours now and forever if we continue faithful unto death. Mankind will all be awakened from the tomb, but we do not know what proportion of them will get everlasting life. We hope that many

will obtain it. But there is a difference between having and hoping. We have a right to life because we are in Christ; because the Father so decreed for us.

DEATH OF HUMAN WILL AT CONSECRATION

At the time of our consecration the old creature dies in the sense that the old will dies. The old will, in the Scriptures termed the "old man" (Col. 3:9,10), is reckoned dead at the time of our consecration. But this is not real death; and hence there is a continual mortifying until the time of actual death. The Apostle says, "I die daily." (I Cor. 15:31.) His old will was given up. The body of flesh which had belonged to the old creature and which had been reckoned dead since consecration, was not really dead. He was not only reckoned alive as a New Creature, but the flesh body was reckoned to be his body until such time as in God's providence, by the power of the First Resurrection, he should be clothed upon with his new body. Hence his flesh is the flesh of the New Creature, and his body that belonging to the New Creature.

The New Creature is responsible for the flesh body, and the weaknesses of the old creature are charged up against the New Creature. There is an arrangement, however, by which the New Creature can have the appropriation of the merit of Christ for the weaknesses of heredity. So St. Paul exhorts the Church to come boldly to the Throne of Grace, there to obtain mercy for the shortcomings of daily life.--Heb. 4:16.

DEATH OF THE HUMAN BODY

The New Creature never dies, unless it forfeits its right to life and goes into the Second Death. What dies is the human body, which was consecrated to death, but which has been loaned to the New Creature to practise on, as it were. God gives the New Creatures their new bodies in the First Resurrection.

Speaking of the First Resurrection, St. John says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (I John 3:2.) This statement is satisfactory to the Lord's people, for though they might without impropriety be curious to know full particulars respecting their spirit bodies--shape, size, elements, etc.--they can well imagine that the new conditions will be so different from present conditions as to be beyond the power of the human brain to comprehend, no matter how particular the description given. But the whole question is settled with the assurance that the Church shall be like her Lord, and see Him--not as He was in the days of His humiliation, the Man Christ Jesus, nor as He appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, robed in flesh in various forms, with various garments--but see Him "as He is," behold His glory, and be like Him, sharing His glory.

To be concluded in our next issue.

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THE TWO WORDS

PROVERBS 18:8,21.

"One day a harsh word rashly said,
Upon an evil journey sped,
And, like a sharp and cruel dart,
It pierced a fond and loving heart;
It turned a friend into a foe,
And everywhere brought pain and woe.

"A kind word followed it one day,
Flew swiftly on its blessed way;
It healed the wound, it soothed the pain,
And friends of old were friends again;
It made the hate and anger cease,
And everywhere brought joy and peace.

"And yet the harsh word left a trace
The kind word could not quite efface;
And though the heart its love regained,
It bore a scar that long remained.
Friends could forgive, but not forget,
Or lose the sense of keen regret.

"Oh! if we could but learn to know
How swift and sure our words can go,
How would we weigh with utmost care
Each thought before it sought the air,
And only speak the words that move
Like white-winged messengers of love!"

PSALM 19:14.

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TO THE JEW FIRST

--OCTOBER 20.--MARK 7:24-30; MATT. 8:5-13.--

"Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."--John 6:37.

THERE IS general confusion prevalent
amongst God's people respecting the relationship
between the Gospel of Christ and
the Jewish nation and between the Jewish
nation and all other nations. In the past

we have been too free to guess, to imagine, to suppose, and have not carefully enough studied the clear statements of the Bible on this subject. The Bible tells that until the coming of Christ--yea, until three and a half years after Jesus died, arose from the dead and ascended on high, the Divine dealings were confined to the Hebrew race--to Abraham and his natural posterity. The whole world is involved in the penalty that came upon Father Adam because of his disobedience--the whole world is under Divine sentence as being unworthy of everlasting life or of relationship with God--the whole world, therefore, as St. Paul describes, "are by nature children of wrath," and all were strangers, foreigners and aliens from God.

The Jews were no better than the remainder of the race, so far as the Scriptures tell, but God, having from the first determined to provide a Redeemer for mankind, through whose Kingdom all the world ultimately should be blest and have the privilege of return to Divine favor, made a selection of Abraham's posterity, because Abraham himself was a noble character whose faith and obedience to God were thus rewarded. It was not, therefore, anything of which the Jews might boast that their nation and not another nation came into relationship with God through the Law Covenant. It was of Divine grace or favor. According to Divine prophecy this favor was

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to continue with the Jew for a definite period of time, namely, until three and a half years after the cross.

THE GOSPEL TO CORNELIUS

As soon as the limit of time expired God manifested His favor toward the Gentiles by sending the Gospel Message to Cornelius, a reverential and holy and generous Gentile. Since then God's favors are as open to the Gentile as to the Jew--"the middle wall of partition" has been "broken down." The Gentiles and Jews are now both received on the same terms, viz., faith in Jesus and consecration to walk in His steps.

It is from this standpoint that we should read the Apostle's statement that the Gospel of Christ "is preached to every creature under heaven." He did not mean nor would it have been true that the Gospel had been preached to every creature in the sense of being proclaimed to all. For now, eighteen centuries later, it has not yet been proclaimed to all mankind. What the Apostle did mean is that the Gospel is now unrestricted, free to be preached to every creature under heaven, no matter what his nationality--that it is no longer confined to Jews as at first. Now, whoever has "an ear to hear, let him hear" the good Message of the Kingdom. Now, whoever hears and has a heart to accept God's gracious

Message, let him present his body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God through Christ. (Rom. 12:1.) Now, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

THE SYRO-PHENICIAN WOMAN'S FAITH

The narrative of today's study fully confirms what we have said about it, namely, that at the time of our Lord's ministry, and for three and a half years after His death, all God's favors still belonged to the Jews only. The Syro-Phenician woman of our study was a Greek--not a Jewess. Her daughter was possessed of an evil spirit, a demon--"obsessed." She heard that Jesus was near the border of Judea, near her home, and she sought Him out, imploring that He would cast out the demon.

But Jesus said to the woman, "Let the children first be filled, for it is not proper to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." She understood the force of this statement. The Jews claimed to be God's people, and the Gentiles were styled "Gentile dogs," because they had never been in covenant-relationship with God. Yet the poor woman's faith in Jesus and her earnest desire for the relief of her daughter moved her to press her case and she answered, "Yea, Lord, but the little dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." She was one of these "little dogs"; might she not have the crumb of comfort and blessing which she craved--the healing of her daughter? Jesus replied, "For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter." She got the crumb, her faith prevailed.

Today the Israel of God, to whom belong all the blessings and promises and favors of God, are the Spiritual Israelites. These, through full consecration to the Lord and through the imputation of the merit of Jesus' sacrifice, begotten of the Holy Spirit, are embryo sons of God, partakers, inheritors of the Divine nature and Kingdom.

Have we not, however, from time to time heard of some outsiders--Gentiles--who have never come into covenant-relationship with God and who are therefore strangers and foreigners to all the blessings which belong to the "household of faith"--have we not heard of some of these receiving occasional crumbs of comfort and of blessing? We have. But surely these will be exceptional cases. The door to come into Natural Israel was barred, but the door into Spiritual Israel is open, and as our text declares, Him that cometh unto Jesus He will in no wise reject. Hence there is no excuse today for any being in the attitude of "dogs," receivers merely of an occasional crumb of God's blessing. If they will, the door of favor still stands open that they may become "sons of God without rebuke."

THE CENTURION'S SERVANT HEALED

A Centurion in the Roman army service corresponded to a Captain in our military service today. Palestine, as a Province, was subject to the Roman Empire, and little garrisons of Roman soldiers were stationed here and there, usually under a Centurion. They were Gentiles, of course. One of these knew of Jesus and His mighty works, and when his faithful and appreciated servant fell sick he went to Jesus asking for healing. In our Lord's metaphor this was another Gentile dog desiring a crumb from the children's table.

The Centurion's faith, our Lord declared, was superior to anything that He had found amongst the Israelites, God's favored people. He was so confident of Jesus' power that while he urged that, being a Gentile, Jesus would not wish to honor or recognize him by coming under his roof, yet he besought Him simply to say the word and he was sure it would be sufficient to heal his servant. He explained that he had this faith because he himself was a man of authority and could command his servants to come and go, and that as Jesus had still higher authority, His messengers, whatever they were, by which He healed sickness and pain, could be commanded and would obey. He got his request.

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Jesus took the occasion to say that the Israelites, who were counting so much on their relationship to God as the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, would find themselves greatly mistaken in the end. Being the children of Abraham did indeed mean that they would have special privileges and opportunities, but these they were enjoying and were not appreciating them. They should not think that God would take them for His Elect people regardless of their character, their faith, their obedience, or their likeness to Abraham. They were indeed the children of the Kingdom--the ones to whom it was properly first offered, but God would not thrust it upon them.

God did take out of their nation the "Israelites indeed"; meantime the rest were blinded, and for the past eighteen centuries He has been completing the Elect Kingdom Church, out of all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues. But He is selecting none except such as have the faith and obedience of Abraham and the spirit of His Son Jesus--none but the holy, the loyal, the true. These will be associated in the Kingdom, while the natural Israelites, over-confident, let the privilege go by.

Nevertheless the Scriptures most clearly declare that the natural seed of Abraham, the Jews, are still heirs of a certain promise of God, which in due time will come to them. To their nation will come the great privilege of being the foremost nation amongst men during Messiah's glorious reign, when the Church glorified, spiritualized, will be with Him in His Throne, invisible to men. St. Paul thus explains that the full number, to

complete the Elect Kingdom class, must be first found amongst the Gentiles, and then, these being glorified in the First Resurrection, Natural Israel will obtain the great earthly blessings which are still theirs and which were promised to their fathers. Natural Israel will receive blessings from Spiritual Israel. "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy."--Rom. 11:25-34.

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"HE DOETH ALL THINGS WELL"

--OCTOBER 27.--MARK 7:31-8:10.--

"He hath done all things well: He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."--V. 37.

IN PREVIOUS STUDIES we have noted the fact that Jesus invariably, in connection with His miracles, impressed the healed ones in particular, and all the witnesses in general, with the fact that the healing power was Divine, thus to establish faith in God. Today's lesson gives a special illustration along this line. A person was brought to the Savior to heal who was deaf and who had an impediment in his speech. They besought Him that He would lay hands on him.

From this it seems evident that most of the miracles were performed by the laying on of hands, although the record also is that some were healed by touching Jesus or touching His garments. In the latter case it is evident that the healed person exercised faith, otherwise he would not have touched the garment in hope of healing. In another case we read that Jesus could not do many mighty works at a certain place on account of their unbelief. Hence, willingly or unwillingly, the power of healing was associated with the exercise of faith; it was either on the part of the sick, or for him by his friends.

The instance under consideration is peculiar. (1) Because Jesus took the man away from the multitude and healed him privately; and (2) it is peculiar as to the means used. He put His fingers into the man's ears, as though to start some life current through them; then He spat and touched the man's tongue. We cannot suppose that the Master's power was limited to these means, when on other occasions He exercised other means. It seems preferable to understand that these methods were used in order to attract the man's attention and assist him in the exercise of faith.

As the man could not hear, nothing said to him could explain the situation; he could see the spitting, he could feel the touch, he understood what was going on, and incidentally

the healing of his person. These matters meant the submission of his mind, or the exercise of a degree of faith. Additionally, after having given those lessons, and while the man still looked at Him, Jesus looked up to Heaven, and thus the patient had a third lesson on the subject, namely, that the power for his cure was expected from God. Jesus sighed, and said, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened," and immediately the man's ears were opened and the difficulty of his speech was gone.

The statement that Jesus sighed is worthy of note; we can only surmise that it indicated His deep sympathy with the man before Him and with the groaning creation in general. We remember another occasion on which it was said that Jesus "groaned in spirit." That was when He stood by the tomb of His friend Lazarus, and saw Mary weeping and the Jews weeping with her; "He groaned in spirit and was troubled," and wept also. The general lesson seems to be that He was

TOUCHED WITH A FEELING OF MAN'S INFIRMITIES,

as had been prophesied. The fact is, He was perfect--He did not have an imperfect body with aches and pains and blemishes, such as other men have, but this did not make Him cold and unsympathetic, rather the reverse. His perfect mind would make all His sensibilities more active than ours; His sympathy would be stronger, His sense of pain keener. We, as a fallen race, have become so accustomed to many of our surroundings that they are commonplace and we are inclined to consider them natural--forgetting that the natural order of man would

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be the perfect order, and that the blemished state is the unnatural.

In yet another way may we suppose our Master was touched with a feeling of our infirmities, namely, by reason of His losing vitality on the occasion of each miracle. Is not this the meaning of the Scripture which declares that "He poured out His soul unto death"? Daily, hourly, His vitality was being exhausted in the healing, blessing, comforting and instructing of those with whom He was in contact. We have a very clear expression on this very subject, in the case of the poor woman who had an issue of blood for years, and who quietly and unostentatiously touched the hem of His garment, saying within herself, "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be healed." She was healed instantly, and Jesus turned Himself about and asked, "Who touched Me?" for He perceived that virtue, vitality, had gone out of Him.

This thought, that the Master was not merely using a Divine power as an Agent of God, but that He was using up His physical power for man's relief, should properly bring our hearts into very close touch and sympathy

with Him, and give us that much clearer view of

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the Savior's love, and that much better foundation for confidence in Him in respect to all our affairs.

In the miracle under consideration in this lesson, our Lord's sigh may also have been, as with us, an evidence of physical weakness--the result of His bestowing of His vitality and energy in the cure of the patient. We are not to think of the death of Jesus, therefore, as having been entirely accomplished at Calvary. Rather are we to understand that it began at His consecration, at thirty years of age, at Jordan, and that it continued day after day, and year after year, and merely culminated and was finished at Calvary.

The day before His crucifixion our Lord intimated this. Speaking of His consecration unto death, He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" It was accomplished fully the following day, on Calvary, when He cried, "It is finished!" His baptism into death was accomplished.

"HE DOETH ALL THINGS WELL"

It is following the account of this miracle that we read that the multitude declared the words of our text. We are not, however, to understand that merely this one healing was the basis of their comment, for the account of these same instances by St. Matthew (15:29-31) tells of great multitudes gathered, having with them many lame, blind, dumb and maimed and many others, and they cast them down at His feet, and He healed them, insomuch that the multitudes wondered when they saw the dumb speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel.

"MANIFESTED FORTH HIS GLORY"

Let us never lose sight of the great central thought connected with our Lord's miracles. His mission was not to heal the sick and to cast out devils, but to "give His life a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." The secondary feature of His work was the calling of the "Israelites indeed" to be His footstep followers, who would be received of the Father and begotten of the Holy Spirit, at and after Pentecost. The miracles and cures performed were merely incidentals and not His real work. They were incidental in the sense that they were illustrations on a small scale of the great work which His Kingdom will accomplish during the thousand years of His reign. Then "all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped."

It would have been a still greater and grander work

for Jesus to have expounded the Divine Plan, and to have opened the eyes of the understanding of the people, and their deaf ears; but this work could not be accomplished to any extent until after He had ascended up on high, and had appropriated the merit of His sacrifice to the justification of believers. Hence it was that Jesus said to His disciples, "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to My Father."

And so it is today that the followers of Jesus are permitted to do greater things than He did, greater than any of those miracles, because it is surely a greater miracle to open the mental eyes than to open the physical; to unstop the mental ears is more wonderful than to open the physical ears; to cause the dumb to sing praises to God in the spirit of their minds is still greater work than the giving of natural speech. It is not that we can do greater works than Jesus of ourselves, nor that we could do as great, for without Him we could do nothing. As it was Jesus who did the cures accomplished by His Apostles when He sent them forth to heal the sick and to cast out devils, so it is Jesus now who is doing these greater things through His consecrated people.

ANOTHER MULTITUDE MIRACULOUSLY FED

The account in the conclusion of this lesson, of the feeding of four thousand people with seven loaves, and the taking up of seven hampers of fragments, was another manifestation of Jesus' power, or as He would express it, of the Divine power in Him. When the five thousand were fed, five loaves and two fishes were used, and they were gotten from a small boy. In this case the disciples themselves had seven loaves, and gave their all for the feeding of the multitude, and all had sufficient; and the fragments, according to the Master's direction, were again collected.

It is worthy of note that in both cases the Master displayed frugality and encouraged economy on the part of His followers. No doubt it would have been just as easy for Him to have created more delicate viands and in great variety. The loaves used then were the same as are used in Palestine today by the natives; they are about the size of our large buns and are made of the entire wheat, ground. Many of the strong natives of Egypt and Palestine seem to live almost exclusively on this bread, about two such small loaves constituting a meal. Quite possibly some of us would find ourselves equally healthy and strong on similarly plain food. It is for us to exercise faith in God and to partake of our daily bread with grateful hearts; there will be a blessing in it, however plain.

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THE HOLY SCRIPTURES THE SOURCE OF TRUE WISDOM

IT IS POSSIBLE that even the Lord's people may sometimes fail to appreciate the value of that great Book, the Bible, which has exerted more influence in the world than all other books combined. Few realize that the Bible has been in the hands of the public for only about one century. When our oldest Bible Societies were organized, Bibles were possessed by the rich alone. Now they are to be found in every house and can be obtained free of cost by the destitute. Additionally, many helps to Scripture study are in print and people are learning the value of some of these and the usefulness of Bible Concordances.

Furthermore, we are prone to forget that general knowledge has just begun to reach the masses. It is not more than a dozen years since education has been made compulsory in all the most civilized lands. Thus God has favored our day in a two-fold manner--by giving us the Bible and by giving the intelligence necessary to its study.

HIGHER CRITICISM THE MOST DANGEROUS ENEMY TO FAITH

But just as these most precious opportunities are in the hands of the masses, just as these blessings of increased knowledge are being given to humanity, just as Christendom is prepared for Bible Study, the Lord has allowed the Adversary to bring forward the most subtle influence in opposition to the Scriptures. The foul-mouthed infidelity of the past has been supplanted by a far more dangerous enemy to Christian faith--the infidelity generally known as "Higher Criticism," dangerous because of its insidious character.

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Higher Criticism has entrenched itself in nearly all the colleges and theological seminaries of Christendom. While all of our churches of all denominations ostensibly stand as defenders of the Bible, yet the citadel of faith is being captured by the great Adversary of God and the Truth--Satan--who is deceiving, estranging and misleading the hosts of Christendom through the very theological professors and doctors of divinity to whom they have been led to look for spiritual light and direction and whom they had supposed to be stanch defenders of the Bible as the inspired Word of God.

This arraignment is severe, but it is a generally truthful one, as each may demonstrate for himself. Most regretfully we are persuaded that four out of every five of all the ministers and Sunday School superintendents of Christendom have ceased to believe in the Bible as the

Divinely inspired revelation of the will and the purposes of the Almighty. Some of these, nevertheless, claim to be earnest followers of Jesus, as the Son of God and of Divine origin. Yet how weak is their position! If Moses did not write the Law, if that Law is not inspired, what shall we think of Jesus and His Apostles, who accepted these writings as inspired and founded all their teachings thereupon? Most evidently, Higher Critics who still believe in Jesus as the Divine Son of God have not thought logically on the proposition, and upon further reflection will reject everything pertaining to the Scriptures.

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THOUSANDS ARE FALLING INTO INFIDELITY

While sorrowfully we behold the fulfilment of the Scriptures in the falling away of these our friends who have been ensnared by the great Fowler (Psa. 91:3), we are not compelled by anything either in reason or in the Scriptures to suppose that their punishment for such infidelity will be eternal torment. We feel sure that the Lord's people are growing stronger in their faith day by day, even though as foretold by the Scriptures a thousand shall fall at their side and ten thousand at their right hand.--Psa. 91:7.

The study of the Bible with the assistances which God now provides is clearing up the mysteries which have perplexed us all our lives and is bringing us to greater appreciation of His glorious purposes, to greater loyalty to Him and to a more earnest desire to serve His Cause of Righteousness and to lift up the standard of the Cross of Christ. Truly, as the Lord through the Prophet has promised, our feet have been kept from stumbling, because the greater intelligence of our day has lifted us up to a higher plane of devotion and appreciation of the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God, which passeth all understanding!

SOME MAY BE RECOVERED FROM THE SNARE OF THE FOWLER

We are not speaking harshly nor unkindly of our dear friends who are stumbling over the educational opportunities of our day. On the contrary, we sympathize with them. Once we stood exactly where they stand. Once we repudiated the Bible as the Word of God. We were as honest then as we are today, and feel bound to give credit to others for equal honesty. We explain their position by the realization of the fact that they are blinded by the dazzling glare of the earthly science of our day. If they ever knew the Scriptures, they have forgotten and have dropped the Science which comes only from above. We trust that some of them may be recovered from the snare of the Adversary, as were we.

There is, however, a marked difference between the position of the so-called Higher Critics and that of ourself. The majority of them seem to exult in their unbelief and to pride themselves upon opposition to the Bible, while our position was the very reverse of this. We deplored the necessity for abandoning the Bible. We considered it the rational thing to expect from the Supreme Creator some revelation of His purposes respecting mankind --the object of their creation, the purpose to be attained by the permission of evil and kindred themes. This revelation we had hoped the Bible to contain.

We have no doubt that many of you have had experiences similar to our own. Let us hope that as we have been recovered from the snare of the Fowler, so also may some others be. Let us be prompt to lend the helping hand and to give an encouraging word. Let us realize that to the honest-hearted the loss of the Bible must mean disaster to faith and hope, as it was in our own case. Let us trust that there are many others as honest as ourselves, who will yet be recovered. Let us be encouraged to help them by a remembrance of how great a blessing came to us through the proper understanding of the Word.

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INTERESTING QUESTIONS

WILL GREAT COMPANY HAVE PART IN FIRST RESURRECTION?

QUESTION.--Will the Great Company have part in the First Resurrection?

Answer.--Those in the First Resurrection will live and reign with Christ a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4,6.) Therefore those of the Great Company will have no part whatever in the First Resurrection. The Apostle Paul speaks of Christ's Resurrection --"That I might know Him and the power of His Resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." (Phil. 3:10.) This is the First Resurrection.

There are, however, two other Scriptures which include the Great Company: Heb. 12:23, where the Apostle speaks of the Church of the First-borns whose names are written in heaven, and Rev. 2:27, where mention is made of those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. All will attain life on the spirit plane, whose names are written in the Book of the Lamb, and the Lord said that He would not blot out the names of any overcomers. --Rev. 3:5.

Do the Great Company overcome? Yes. God has no blessings to give to those who are not overcomers. What is the difference between the Great Company and the Little Flock? The difference is that the Little Flock are

those who are more than loyal to God. The Great Company will be loyal to God in that they will not withhold their lives when the test shall come. They will perish rather than deny the Lord; and thus they will experience the destruction of the flesh. But they did not go forth with sufficient zeal to carry out their consecration. They were loyal to God, but they did no more than maintain their loyalty.

Then we have our Lord's statement as recorded in John 5:28,29: "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life." This will include both the Little Flock and the Great Company; both classes will get eternal life. If this statement includes the Ancient Worthies, then it

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means three classes: the Little Flock, the Great Company and the Ancient Worthies, though there will be different planes of perfection--human perfection, then the perfection that will be like that of the angels, and lastly the perfection that will come to those who shall be like Christ, namely, that of the Divine nature.

"WISDOM--RIGHTEOUSNESS--SANCTIFICATION--REDEMPTION"

Question.--In what way was our Lord made unto us wisdom, righteousness [justification], sanctification and redemption?--I Cor. 1:30.

Answer.--In a great variety of ways our Lord was made unto us wisdom. He is the Head of the Church which is His Body. And as the head is the center of knowledge, so the Lord Jesus is the Head of His Church. But the particular thought of the text seems to be that of a progressive order. Looking, then, to see how Jesus was our wisdom before He became our Justifier and Sanctifier, we perceive that the Scriptural declaration is that "no man cometh to the Father but by" our Lord.

Previous to justification the Father draws, for none can come to Christ except through the Father. After the Father has drawn, the wisdom comes from Christ, who instructs us how to come to the Father. Just as the disciples were instructed by our Lord, so it is all the way down throughout the Age. There is no other way by which men may be saved--"None other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Sinners could not be acceptable to the Father except by the way of justification such as the Father has provided. This justification means their blessing. "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.) We need to be instructed. The light was not prior to Jesus Christ; for we read that He is the Light. He makes that statement Himself: "I

am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."-- John 1:9; 8:12.

This wisdom was first promulgated by our Lord. So the same wisdom which instructed His disciples guides men back to the Father, instructs them as to what discipleship means, makes them wise in order that they may take the steps by which that discipleship is to be gained. Whoever will be His disciples must take up their cross and follow Him. No matter in what way one may get the wisdom, it comes to him from our Lord Jesus Christ; and without this wisdom we could not know how to come to God. No one can ever come to God without this wisdom. And so His wisdom instructs what will be the reward of discipleship.

Our Lord appeared in the presence of God for us--on our behalf. Thus, according to the Father's plan and arrangement, He became the Justifier of those who come to the Father by Him, and none can get the justification except by a consecration of life. Then He becomes their sanctification by assisting them in everything necessary to their sanctification. They have the will to do, and as they have this will, so now He works in them a sanctified character in life.

This course being followed, the one who has the wisdom of the narrow way first obtains justification through our Lord's blood and then sanctification through following in the Lord's footsteps. Finally comes the deliverance [redemption] by the First Resurrection. The One who led us all the way is the One who leads us still and who will finally lead us into the New Jerusalem, the glorious condition beyond the veil.

FORGIVENESS OF ALL SIN

Question.--"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9.) How comprehensive is the word "all" here used?

Answer.--Except sin against the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:31,32), all manner of sin amongst the sons of men shall be forgiven, either in this Age or in the Age to come. The Holy Spirit here denotes a light, an intelligence, respecting God's purpose. Whoever wilfully and

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intelligently would sin against Jesus, would be guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. But if he blaspheme the name of Jesus, being deceived in some way, then the sin is not blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and may be forgiven. In the case of the Church, these forgivable sins will be forgiven through the Advocate, who has appeared for us in the Heavenly Court and can restore us to favor with the Father, unless we sin against full light and knowledge. To do this would be to take ourselves

out of His hands.

But there might be a sin partly wilful--a sin in which both superstition or weakness and a certain amount of wilfulness had a part. As to how this would be possible we answer that there is a difference between the forgiveness of the moral obliquity and the sin. For instance, a child has committed some trespass and the parent says, "I will punish you for what you have done." There might be two parts of the punishment, one corporal punishment, the other the displeasure of the parent.

With some children the latter part of the punishment, the cloud between the child and parent, would be unbearable. Then the parent might say, "Since you tell me that you are sorry and that you will never do it again, I forgive you. But I told you that there would be a penalty attaching to disobedience. I will make the penalty as light as would seem best in my judgment, but you must still bear punishment." And that which would be proper for an earthly parent we may consider might be done by the Heavenly Father.

In the case of the Prophet David: he committed two very serious, grievous sins--one in respect to Uriah and Uriah's wife, and the other in respect to Uriah's death. But we remember with what perseverance David pleaded with the Lord; and though the Lord indicated His forgiveness, yet there must be a punishment. David's child died.--2 Sam. 12:15-22.

Again, Satan provoked David to number Israel, contrary to the command of the Lord; God was displeased and smote Israel. Again David repented and prayed earnestly for forgiveness. The Lord offered him three things, one of which he must choose as the punishment for his sin. "Thus," saith the Lord, "Choose thee either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, or else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence in the land, and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel." (I Chron. 21:10-14.) Realizing his own weakness, David, in humility declined to make a choice. The three days' pestilence was sent upon Israel, and there fell seventy thousand men; but in the meantime, before the punishment reached David, he had received the Lord's forgiveness for his sin.

So with the sins of the Lord's people. If there is more or less of ignorance, then the punishment is in proportion to the amount of wilfulness. Temptations come to us and to all mankind. Christ died for man's sin, from which He freely absolves the whole human family--the Church now, and the world in their day of trial.

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DEAR PASTOR AND BROTHER BELOVED IN THE LORD:--

Greetings! Since I cannot see my way to join in personal fellowship with you and the dear friends in Aberdeen, I must give vent to my sentiments by writing a few words to congratulate you, the Lord's honored servant, on this welcome visit to the "Granite City."

How could I let such an opportunity pass without telling you that my heart still warms toward you because of the soul-cheering message, which flows from your lips and pen, setting atune the melodious heartstrings of so many of the Lord's holy harpers!

I know you will respond, "Let the praise be His," but as the Master said, "Whom my Father honors I will also honor"; therefore, I thank you, as the servant whom He uses in dispensing His favors so free, and my sincere prayer, in which Sister Blaikie joins, is that the good Lord shall continue to bless and prosper you in your earnest labors of love on behalf of His precious, consecrated flock.

Humbly yours, in the Morning Light,
R. W. BLAIKIE.--Scotland.

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MY DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:--

We are now paying our 15th annual visit as evangelists to our native county of Worcestershire, and being supplied from your London depot with two large parcels of your publications, we are entering upon a new phase of the Mission. We have already distributed large quantities in Sydenham and London. I regard them as direct and powerful weapons of destruction against (1) Darwin's doctrine of Evolution; (2) Roman Catholicism; (3) John Calvinism; (4) The natural immortality of the soul; (5) The ferocious doctrine of Eternal Torment in hell; (6) The monkish teaching of an eternal Devil:--and reconstruction in favor of (1) A Scriptural mode of exegesis of the Bible; (2) The true science of geology and the creation of the earth, involving its perpetuity; (3) The divinity of Christ on which doctrine the Ransom-price is paid; (4) God's "plan" of destroying evil and establishing everlasting righteousness as one Jehovah; (5) Making future life depend on resurrection; (6) The doctrine of Restitution "of all things spoken by the mouth of the Holy Prophets since the world began."

In these books issued by your Society there is a grace and power of expression which, accompanied by high intelligence, makes them most suitable to place in the hands of all classes, the religious and the irreligious alike, and therefore the uncompromising spirit of toleration and the absence of offensive dogma breathed through every page of these writings reflects great credit upon both the publishers and the author. They are well adapted to accomplish the work for which they are intended. I am pleased, even delighted, at having discovered such labor and laborers in the Master's vineyard and I hope heartily to co-operate in such labors

until "the laborer's task is o'er" and we are called to higher services.

The teachings are not new to me as you will have observed from my publications, but although David and Solomon were closely related, and deeply interested in God's purposes, what David was not called upon nor permitted to do, Solomon in due time accomplished.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

He is the Great Supreme. Praise His Holy Name!

Yours in the hope of Christ, (REV.) J. MARTIN.

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:--

I have been enjoying the light of Present Truth for two and a half years. The Vow did not appeal to me when first I read it, but as time passed I realized the narrowness of the way and in November last I decided to take the Vow, and have been greatly blessed by so doing. In times of trial it has been a great help to know that others of like precious faith are praying for me. The part that helps me most is scrutinizing my thoughts and words.

Before coming into Present Truth I was a member of the M. E. Church. When my husband received Present Truth I felt very much worried about him and asked my Pastor if he had ever heard of MILLENNIAL DAWN books. He told me that the books were worse than poison; if they were branded poison, no one would touch them. As my husband attended the church with me I asked the minister to call and have a talk with him, but he never came and I thought he did not do his duty; so I left the church and went to a mission. My friends and I prayed earnestly for my husband and at last I pleaded with our Heavenly Father to show me if I was wrong and my husband was right.

In a short time I got the "hell" theory cleared up; having a dear brother burned to death who did not profess to be a Christian, and, having asked fully one dozen ministers where he was and gotten ten different answers, it almost made me an unbeliever in the Bible!

May the dear Father continue to bless you! Grace be to you, and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ!

Brother Moody and I send our names, as we have taken the Vow.

With Christian love,

MR. AND MRS. EDWIN R. MOODY.--Can.

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BEREAN QUESTIONS IN SCRIPTURE STUDIES

Series VI., Study X.--The Baptism of the New Creation.

OCTOBER 6

THE PROPER SYMBOL OF BAPTISM.

(46) What conditions of the real baptism would exclude infants from receiving symbolical baptism? and could symbolical baptism properly precede the real baptism? P. 450, par. 2, 3.

(47) Supposing the subject of water-baptism were so confused that the method practised by the early Church could not be positively determined, what form of symbolical baptism would reasonably suggest itself to the mind instructed as to the real baptism? P. 451, par. 1.

(48) What advantages will accrue from obedience in performing symbolical immersion? P. 452, par. 1, 2.

(49) Inasmuch as there is but one proper baptism, it follows there can be but one proper symbol of it. In illustration of the general agreement among Christians as to immersion, read "Some Testimonies to the Point." Pp. 453, 454.

WHO MAY ADMINISTER BAPTISM.

(50) What authority is given in Matthew 28:19 respecting who may perform the ceremony of water-baptism in the Church? P. 454, par. 1.

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FORM OF WORDS.

(51) Suggest a simple form of appropriate words for this service? P. 455, par. 1.

REPETITION OF THE SYMBOL.

(52) How may any who have been immersed in water decide regarding a repetition of the symbol? P. 455, par. 2.

(53) Explain 1 Cor. 15:29. Pp. 455, 456.

Series VI., Study XI.--The Passover of the New Creation.

(1) What was the origin of the Feast of the Passover? How long did it last, and what did it commemorate? P. 457, first 17 lines.

(2) Why is the New Creation especially interested in Natural Israel's Passover? P. 457, 17th line to end of par.

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(3) Explain the antitypical significance of the Passover in Egypt as related to mankind in general? P. 458.

(4) Describe the peculiar position of the "first-born" in the type. P. 459, par. 1.

(5) Show how the antitype is found in the "Church of the First-born." P. 459, par. 2, P. 460, par. 1.

(6) What was the importance and significance of the Passover Lamb in the type? P. 460, par. 2.

OUR LORD'S MEMORIAL.

(7) Show by means of the type why "Christ our Passover" could not have ended His sacrifice at any other moment of His life? P. 461, par. 1.

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(8) What was the antitype of the selection of the lamb on the tenth day? P. 461, par. 2.

(9) How was it possible for our Lord and His Apostles to eat the typical supper in the same day that the Lord was crucified? P. 462, par. 1.

(10) Why was it obligatory for Jesus and His Apostles to celebrate the type, and what did our Lord institute in its place? P. 462, par. 2.

(11) Explain the significance of accepting the true Passover Lamb? P. 463, par. 1.

(12) Was the "Lord's Supper," which took the place of the "Passover Supper," a higher type, or a memorial of the antitype? P. 463, par. 2.

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