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ON MEMORIAL SUNDAY

On April 20th, at 10 a. m., at Brooklyn Tabernacle, an opportunity will be given for symbolic baptism.

1913--GENERAL CONVENTIONS--1913

We are giving timely notice of this year's Conventions to permit the friends to arrange their affairs accordingly, and to decide which they may prefer to attend. Places and dates as follows:

Pertle Springs, Mo. (near Warrensburg).....June 1-8
Hot Springs, Ark.....June 1-8
Madison, Wis.....June 29-July 6
Springfield, Mass.....July 13-20
Toronto, Canada.....July 20-27
Asheville, N. C.....July 20-27
Mountain Lake Park, Md.....July 20-27

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BETHEL HYMNS FOR MAY

After the close of the hymn the Bethel Family listens to the reading of "My Vow Unto the Lord," then joins in prayer. At the breakfast table the MANNA text is considered. Hymns for May follow: (1) 165; (2) 1; (3) 160; (4) 176; (5) 191; (6) 327; (7) 12; (8) 130; (9) 260; (10) 324; (11) 195; (12) 145; (13) 90; (14) 312; (15) 315; (16) 108; (17) 299; (18) 314; (19) 301; (20) 72; (21) 201; (22) 107; (23) 109; (24) 87; (25) 16; (26) 257; (27) 5; (28) 29; (29) 135; (30) 151; (31) 93.

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"SHALL A NATION BE BORN AT ONCE?"

"Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a Man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children."--Isa. 66:7,8.

THE name "Zion" was anciently applied to a prominent hill of Jerusalem, generally regarded as the southwestern and highest of those on which the city was built. It included

the most ancient part of the city, with the citadel; and having been first occupied by a palace, it was called "the city of David." (2 Chron. 5:2.) It was also called the "holy hill," or "hill of the sanctuary" (Psa. 2:6), being the original site of the tabernacle pitched by David for the reception of the ark.

By the Prophets the name "Zion" was often put for Jerusalem itself, and also for its inhabitants, who were sometimes called sons and daughters of Zion. The word was often used in a wider sense, as was Jerusalem also, to signify the entire nation of Israel. And since fleshly Israel was typical of Spiritual Israel, the name "Zion" applies with still deeper significance to the Gospel Church, a term which throughout the Gospel Age included the entire body of professed Christians, of whom all the truly consecrated are on probation for full membership in the Church triumphant--the true Church, the Zion of the future and the true Zion of the present Age, the Elect Little Flock, to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom. (Luke 12:32.) In the symbolic application of the term we must, therefore, judge from the character of the prophecy whether the reference is to the fleshly or to the Spiritual House of Israel, or to both; and, if to the latter, whether it applies in its broadest sense to the nominal Gospel Church, or to the Elect Little Flock, the only true Church in God's estimation.

The symbolic travail in the above prophecy is a reference to the great time of trouble--the travail that is to come upon the nominal Gospel Church, great "Babylon," from which some are to be accounted worthy to escape. (Luke 21:36.) This is indicated by the preceding verses, which locate the time of this prophecy as synchronous with that wherein is heard "a voice of noise [confusion] from the city" [Babylon], and "a voice [of truth and warning] from the Temple" [the Elect Little Flock of consecrated and faithful ones], and "a voice of Jehovah, that rendereth recompense to His enemies"--in the great time of trouble.--Isa. 66:6.

The travail that is coming upon nominal Zion--"Christendom," "Babylon"--will be a great and sore affliction, "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1.) But the marvelous thing the Prophet here has to record is that a Man child is to be born out of Zion before this travail comes. This is a striking reference to the fact, elsewhere clearly taught, that the ripe wheat of the Gospel Church are to be separated from the tares, that they are to be gathered into the barn condition of safety before the burning, the consuming trouble, shall come upon the latter. (Matt. 13:30.) This Man child, therefore, is the Little Flock--the true Zion in God's estimation, the Body of Christ; as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion [the nominal Gospel Church] the Deliverer [The Christ, Head and Body], and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob [fleshly Israel, or Zion]."--Rom. 11:26.

TWO CLASSES BORN IN ZION

This is the Man child that is to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:16,29.) The birth of the Man child is the First Resurrection. Blessed and holy are all they that have part in the First Resurrection. (Rev. 20:6.) Such are now begotten of God by the Word of Truth, and quickened by the Holy Spirit (James 1:18; Eph. 2:1; Rom. 8:11), and in due time--before the travail--they will be born in the glorious likeness of Christ.

The birth of the Man child began over eighteen hundred years ago with the resurrection of Christ Jesus. There the Head of this Body of Christ came forth; and as surely as the Head has been born, so surely shall the Body come forth. "Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb? saith thy God." (Isa. 66:9.) Ah, no: "the Man child," The Christ complete, the Great Deliverer, shall come forth!

Yet "who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things?" for not only shall the Body of Christ, the true overcoming Zion, the "holy nation, the peculiar people," be delivered out of nominal Zion before the travail; but when she travails, a Great Company of other children will be born. This is the Great Company described in the Apocalypse as coming up out of the great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7:14.) The Body of Christ, the Man child, born before the travail, will be composed of those who heard and obeyed the call, "Come out of her, My people," etc. (Rev. 18:4), and who were counted worthy to have a part in the First Resurrection.

The many children born through the great tribulation

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will be those believers in nominal Zion, Babylon, who have allowed themselves to become measurably intoxicated by the spirit of Babylon, the spirit of the world, and who, therefore, are not quick to discern and prompt to obey the voice of the Lord in this harvest time. They fail to see that it is harvest time, and consequently fail to understand the separating work which the sickle of Present Truth is accomplishing. They regard those servants of God who wield the sickle as enemies, who oppose them and the Lord, whom they serve.

The great tribulation, or travail, that is coming upon nominal Zion is the only thing that can convince such as these. This class includes a large number of believing children of God, whose manner of life is righteous and generally circumspect, but who are nevertheless worldly-minded, and who are not rendering themselves a living sacrifice to God, following the Lord through evil and through good report, and meekly bearing the reproach of Christ. They have respect to men's opinions, traditions

and plans, and fail to submit themselves fully to the will and plan of the Lord. And only when they behold the wreck of nominal Zion--Christendom, Babylon--will they realize its gross errors and be delivered from them and it.

CHRIST A STUMBLING-STONE TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

"Behold," says the Prophet, "I lay in Zion a stumbling-stone and rock of offense; and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." (Rom. 9:33; Isa. 8:14,15; 28:16.) That stumbling-stone is redemption through the precious blood of Christ. At that stone the fleshly Zion stumbled, and so now the nominal spiritual Israel is stumbling at the same stone; for it was to be "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel" (Isa. 8:14)--the fleshly and the spiritual.

The Elect Little Flock of overcomers do not so stumble, but recognize this as the chief corner-stone of the true Zion, remembering the words of the Prophet, "Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe [in Christ as your Redeemer who bought you with His precious blood] He is precious; but unto them which be disobedient,...the same is made...a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." (I Peter 2:6-8.) God does not purpose to deliver His Kingdom unto any of the disobedient. They need the fiery trial of the coming tribulation to bring them into a proper attitude before God; and hence they must come up through the great tribulation.

While those who are truly begotten of God, who have been quickened by His Spirit to the new spiritual life, and who are faithful in fulfilling their covenant of entire consecration as living sacrifices unto God, may well rejoice in hope of the First Resurrection, and of being born before the travail upon nominal Zion, it is also a cause of rejoicing that many of the weaker children of God, now stumbling with nominal Zion, will, nevertheless, by and by be recovered and saved so as by fire [born] through the great tribulation [travail], in which nominal Zion shall expire, but from which they shall come forth.

REJOICE WITH JERUSALEM

"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her." "Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in My people, and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying."--Isa. 66:10; 65:18,19.

This call to rejoice with Jerusalem immediately follows the prophetic announcement of the birth of Zion, the terms Zion and Jerusalem being here used interchangeably.

The birth of Zion, the exaltation of the Body of Christ to Kingdom power and glory, will indeed be a cause for rejoicing on the part of all people. It is for this exaltation and manifestation of the sons of God that the whole creation waits, groaning and travailing.--Rom. 8:19-23.

When the true Zion is thus exalted, then will follow the great work of the Kingdom. The travail upon nominal Zion immediately succeeding will quickly liberate the true children of God still in her, and they shall come forth to larger views and higher principles, and to develop into nobler characters. The rule of the iron rod will quickly subdue all things, completely breaking up the whole present social fabric and accomplishing the leveling process which will make ready for the reign of righteousness.

Then the great Millennial reign of righteousness will begin, when every man will have a full, fair opportunity to gain everlasting life by faith and obedience to the New Covenant. And no man's opportunity will be less than a hundred years; though if he wastes all of that time without taking any steps toward reformation, he will be considered unworthy of life and will be cut off in the Second Death. (Isa. 65:20.) But the obedient shall eat the good of the land. (Isa. 1:19.) "They shall build houses and inhabit them [there will not be so many houses to let in those days probably, but improved and cultivated homesteads, in which the owners shall take pleasure and comfort]; and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of My people ["They shall renew their strength"--Isa. 40:31]; and Mine Elect [all the faithful and obedient then] shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed [the children] of the blessed of the Lord [the Church], and their offspring with them."--Isa. 65:21-23.

"And it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear"--so near will the Lord be, so mindful of all their interests. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together [The reference here may be to men formerly of wolf-like or lamb-like character, or to animals, or to both--the expression signifying in any case a reign of peace]; and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's meat [--another expression similar to, 'His enemies shall lick the dust,' signifying the destruction of the serpent, or rather of Satan, whom the serpent symbolizes]. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain [Kingdom], saith the Lord."--Isa. 65:24,25.

Thus the birth of the true Zion will be a cause for rejoicing among all who truly love righteousness: for though it will first dash in pieces all their long cherished hopes, it is the dawn of real hope for all the world. It will humble all their pride, despoil them of all their cherished possessions and what they have come to esteem their rights, break down all their boasted institutions, civil,

social and religious, and completely wreck all order and all hope, until they begin to see hope in the new order of things inaugurated by the Kingdom of God.

Yes, rejoice with Jerusalem, Zion, and be glad with her, all ye that love her, as well as all ye that mourn for her now and try to dissuade her from her course, not seeing the prize at the end of her life of faithful self-sacrifice; for soon her glory will appear, not only to her own exceeding joy, but also to the joy and blessing of "all the families of the earth."

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QUALITIES AND ATTRIBUTES OF JEHOVAH

THE SCRIPTURES declare a "beginning of the creation of God." His qualities and attributes were the same then that they are now; for the Scriptures also declare His unchangeableness--"the same yesterday, today and forever."--Hebrews 13:8; Psalm 90:1,2.

The completeness of the Divine perfection is such that companionship is not necessary to the happiness of Jehovah. The One who "inhabith eternity" is self-centered. The creation of angels and of man was indeed His pleasure, because, benevolently, He desires to do good, to give capacity for pleasure and to afford it opportunity for gratification. Furthermore, the highest good of His creatures calls for an exhibition to the full of all the elements of Divine character--Divine Justice, Love, Power and Wisdom.

BELIEF IN SATAN LOGICAL

The declaration of the Bible respecting the Father's Power is that "the eyes of the Lord [the intelligence of Jehovah] are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." (Proverbs 15:3.) This statement implies that there are things evil as well as good; things which God approves and things which He disapproves. This citation comes the nearest to a suggestion of God's omnipresence contained in the Scriptures.

The fact that the Lord has knowledge of all conditions of things is not out of harmony with the other fact that He permits conditions which He disapproves, and which He declares that He will ultimately destroy. "All the wicked will He destroy."--Psalm 145:20.

If we accept the great Divine premise that the Bible is the Word of God, then we are bound to accept the declaration that there is a being called Satan, that he is the "god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4), and that he now works in the "hearts of the children of disobedience." (Ephesians 2:2.) These words imply not only that there

are evil principles at work in this world, but that behind them there are evil spirit beings, of whom Satan is the inspirer and through whom he is working.

Certain statements are made respecting Satan which could not properly be applied to a principle of evil, or to a working of error; as, for instance, Jesus declared that Satan was a "murderer" from the beginning--and a "liar." (John 8:44.) Errors and principles are not murderers and liars. It would be a misuse of language to make such application. Only an intelligent being can be a murderer or a liar. Hence the whole tenor of the Scriptures

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upholds the assertion that there is such a being as Satan and that he is in opposition to God.

If we were to suppose the everlasting continuance of Satan as a being, as an adversary of God, the matter would seem strange to us, because irreconcilable with our conception of Divine Power. We have the statement of the Scriptures respecting his reign and ultimate destruction. (Hebrews 2:14.) With this information we have a reasonable, logical thought on the subject. When we consider the Scriptural presentation further, that originally Satan was not an evil being, but that he made himself evil by the exercise of personal liberty and became the enemy of God, the subject seems to be clear and reasonable. In fact, this is the only rational solution to the problem of his existence.

To suppose that there is no Satan is to suppose that God has permitted His Word to deceive mankind in this respect, or that the Devil is a manifestation of God Himself --a position which is unthinkable. Nor is it logical to say that there is a Devil, an opponent of God, and at the same time to maintain that God is all in all, and omnipresent --everywhere present. But we do not find this latter statement to be Biblical. The Scriptural proposition is that at the close of the Millennial Age, when Christ shall have conquered sin and Satan, when Satan shall have been destroyed, and when the Kingdom of the Universe shall be in absolute harmony, then God will be all in all. (I Corinthians 15:28.) To all eternity there will be no opposition to His will. There is opposition now, however, in many places and at many times. But ultimately, God will have full control.

THE OMNIPOTENCE OF JEHOVAH

To say that God is all Power is sophistry of language which often misleads the one questioning as well as the one attempting to answer him. The statement is not correct. If God is all Power, then He is not Love or Justice or Wisdom. He would thus be limited to the one great attribute of Power, or force. Such cannot be the thought entertained by any logical mind. It is, nevertheless, a form of statement that is often used, perhaps unintentionally,

but very injuriously to the reasoning faculties.

The Bible nowhere says God is all Power. There is a marked difference between being power and exercising power. God is all-powerful. He has the ability to exercise power in any direction to the extent that He wills.

If He had chosen, He could have so created Satan that he could not think or do other than in harmony with the Divine will; or He could have exercised His power to crush the Adversary and thus have destroyed him long ago. But He has permitted Satan to exist for six thousand years, in the sense that He does not restrain the Devil from doing evil. The Scriptures, however, tell us that God will eventually destroy him.

The scope of the exercise of Divine Power is the Universe, but it is difficult for our finite minds to comprehend the meaning of this word--Universe. Astronomers tell us that by the aid of photo-astronomy they can see nearly 125,000,000 suns--the centers of solar systems like our own, with supposedly more than a billion of planets more or less like our earth. These, we may assume, are in process of development, are in preparation for inhabitants, whom the great Creator will in due time provide. From the Scriptural standpoint, however, the great work of human creation began with our earth. What a boundless thought we have in the mere suggestion that the billion worlds are to be peopled, and that the lessons of righteousness and sin, of life and death eternal, now being taught to humanity, will never need to be repeated!

We stand appalled at the immensity of space and at the law and order which everywhere reign! We heartily assent to the words of the Prophet David, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." (Psalm 19:2,3.) The person who can look upon this wonderful display of superhuman power and believe that these worlds created themselves, shows to the majority of us that, if he has brains, they are sadly disordered, unbalanced. Whoever, after mature thought, concludes that there is no God, that everything came to be what it is by chance or by the operation of some blind force--that person is described in the Scriptures in the following words, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."--Psalm 14:1.

As scientific instruments demonstrate to us the immensity of the Universe, we perceive that the Prophet used very moderate language indeed in his description of the majestic power and greatness of the Creator, when he represents Jehovah as weighing the mountains in His balance and holding the seas in the hollow of His Hand.

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(Isaiah 40:12.) From His standpoint, a thousand years are but as a watch in the night. (Psalm 90:4.) How insignificantly small we all feel in the presence of our God!

No wonder some great men are inclined to say that humanity is too insignificant from the Divine standpoint to be worthy of the least consideration--much less to be objects of Divine care and providence!

THE OMNISCIENCE OF JEHOVAH

To say that God is all Knowledge is also an inaccurate statement. If God were all Knowledge, how could He be all Power? God has all Knowledge, possesses all Knowledge. But this is a different matter. If we say, "The boy has a hoop," we do not mean that he is a hoop. To be a hoop and to have a hoop are not the same. God is omniscient; that is, He knows all things. This very fact proves that He is a personal God. There can be no knowledge without personality. Knowledge implies cognizance of external things. Amongst the things outside the Divine Person are things both good and evil.

When we read that God created man in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26,27), we may know that man is not God. He was merely made in the image of God. Because God is perfect, therefore the human being made in His image would be satisfactory to God. That human being had knowledge. But he neglected the Word of God, and thus he learned something by his neglect. What he learned is mentioned in the Scriptures. "He is become as one of Us [the Elohim], to know good and evil." (Genesis 3:22.) This statement proves that God knows good and evil.

If God did not know evil from good, then He could not be our Instructor. By His laws, His principles, God sets before our minds that which is right and that which is wrong. Adam knew how to discriminate between right and wrong, but his disobedience increased his knowledge of both good and evil. In his fallen condition man cannot always determine between them. Therefore God gave Israel a Law, and man's knowledge of that Law assists him to discriminate between good and evil.

One of old time said, "Thou art a God which hidest Thyself." (Isaiah 45:15.) How true! As a result the world by wisdom knows not God. He is near in His Wisdom and Love, yet He can be seen only by those whose eyes of understanding have been opened. But we are glad that the time is coming when all the blind eyes shall see clearly. "As truly as I live," says Jehovah, "all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Num. 14:21; Hab. 2:14.) Then all shall see what God hath wrought, and our temporary blindness will but accentuate the glorious brightness of His Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power.

"GOD IS LOVE"

God is Love in the sense that the term Love represents the central principle of the Divine character. There is

nothing contrary to love in God. The Scriptures do not teach that there is nothing except love anywhere--that God is everywhere and love is everywhere. But they teach that God is a loving character. This does not militate against the other statements that God is just, wise and powerful. But this quality of Love best of all represents the Divine Being. All of His Justice is in harmony with His Love. There is no exercise of Justice or Power in an evil sense, for all His attributes work together for good to all His creatures.

The Scriptures encourage us to reason from the known to the unknown. They tell us that although God is so great, so wise, so powerful, He is also just and loving. And the more we consider the matter, the more reasonable the Bible description of the Almighty appears. His Power we see demonstrated. The Wisdom of One so great cannot be doubted. When we come to consider, Could One so wise and so powerful be unjust or ungenerous? Our hearts answer, No! No one is really great who is devoid of justice and love. So surely as our God is Jehovah, He must possess these qualities.

When we came in contact with the Bible, and particularly after we learned something of its teachings and got rid of the misrepresentations which gathered about it during the Dark Ages--then we began to recognize it as the Message of Jehovah to His creatures. It informs us that the great Creator of the Universe is not only Almighty and All-wise, but loving and kind, with Justice as the foundation of His Empire. (Psalm 89:13,14.) From the Bible we learn, too, that our Creator has been pleased to make us in His own image, in His own moral likeness, to the intent that we may enjoy Him and the fruits of His righteousness to all eternity.

All the Power, all the Justice, all the Wisdom, of God must be used in accordance with His own character, which is Love. It will therefore be loving Wisdom, loving Justice, which He will use toward all creation in the exercise of His loving Power for their good. He created man. He permitted Adam to disobey His Law, telling us that

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He knew in advance what man would do and that He permitted man to do wrong.--Isaiah 46:9,10.

In permitting sin to enter the world, God had two ends in view. He purposed to give an illustration to the angels respecting the results of obedience and of disobedience. He also intended that the human family should gain a lesson from this experience. Thus we know that God's arrangement from the beginning has been for a resurrection of the dead. "As all in Adam die, even so shall all in Christ be made alive."--I Corinthians 15:21,22.

If we were to take any fragment of Scripture as a basis for a system of doctrine, we would find ourselves either teaching universalism on the one hand, or claiming that God has no Wisdom, or that He purposed the evil, or

what not. We would get into all sorts of confusion. But when we see the perfect adjustment of God's Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, and realize that He has good purposes respecting the evil, that He has fully marked out what it shall do and what it shall not do, either in its present influence, or in its ultimate influence, this gives us confidence in the character of God.

THE PERMISSION OF EVIL

From only one standpoint can Divine Wisdom and Love be discerned in connection with the history of mankind. It must include the Age about to be ushered in-- the period of Messiah's reign of righteousness. This will be the time when every member of Adam's race, sharing the penalty of sin and death because inheriting his weaknesses, will be set free from these; the time when the full knowledge of the glory of God shall be granted to every human being, and when a full opportunity will come to each, by obedience, to gain life everlasting.

The lesson thus far taught is the goodness and the severity of God--His goodness in bringing us into being, and His severity in the punishment of Father Adam's wilful transgression; also to both men and angels, Justice, unswerving Justice. The next lesson to be taught to God's intelligent creatures is that God is Love. The foundation for these lessons is already laid in the Ransom-sacrifice of Jesus, through and on account of which He becomes the world's Redeemer and Restorer. A few

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can believe this Message by faith; but not many have the ear of faith or the eye of faith. Only the saints are able to appreciate this great fact at the present time.

That which is now secret and understood only by the few is shortly to be made manifest to every creature in heaven and in earth. All will then see and be able to appreciate the great fact that the redemption accomplished by the sacrifice of Jesus is world-wide and means a full deliverance from the sin-and-death condemnation which passed upon Adam and all of his race, to all who will accept the same as a gift from God. The remainder will be destroyed in the Second Death.

THE SECOND DEATH THE ESSENCE OF WISDOM

As for the Second Death, we easily see that if God created man in His own image, man must of necessity be a free moral agent; otherwise he would not be in God's image. If he was created a free moral agent, he must have the power or privilege to will wrong as well as right. If he exercise his power in the direction of evil, God has the power to destroy him. On the other hand, if he live in harmony with righteousness God has the power to grant him life to all eternity.

The destruction of the wicked in the Second Death is the essence of Wisdom. As to the declaration that God is too pure to behold evil (Habakkuk 1:13), the thought of the original seems to be that God's character is so pure and so righteous that He will not continue to behold evil. He will not permit evil to exist to all eternity, for this condition would not be pleasing to Him.

This very thought implies that there is evil to behold. If not so, how could He behold it? But this is all consistent with the Divine Plan. Ultimately all evil shall be destroyed. Ultimately all creatures which are "in heaven and on earth and such as are in the sea" shall be heard saying, "Blessing and honor and glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."--Revelation 5:13.

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THE CONFLICT BETWEEN FLESH AND SPIRIT

"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."--Galatians 5:17.

THE APOSTLE is addressing these words to Christians, who have become New Creatures in Christ, to whom old things have passed away, and all things have become new. These are said to be begotten of the Holy Spirit and therefore to be, in reality, spirit beings, who will be changed in the Resurrection, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"--spirit beings who have not yet been completed. But the New Creature has only the flesh in which to operate at the present time.

God expects that the New Creature will manifest his loyalty, and demonstrate worthiness of perfection of the spirit in the First Resurrection. The Apostle says that such must expect to find a conflict going on--the Spirit lusting against the flesh and the flesh against the Spirit. The word lust here used is a good Anglo-Saxon word meaning desire. The New Creature strongly desires to be loyal to God and to do His will. The flesh strongly desires against all this.

These two spirits are in opposition. The two are in antagonism. The flesh desires to serve itself. It has earthly desires, earthly objects, earthly aims. The New Creature desires to set its affections on the Heavenly things and to sacrifice the earthly interests and aims and prospects, to live as a spirit being tabernacling in the flesh--to live no longer as a human being with earthly interests. Whatever serves the one interest is in conflict with the other interest.

NEW CREATURES HAMPERED BY THE FLESH

The words of our text are not addressed to the world, but to the Church. The Church has been begotten of the Holy Spirit--a New Creation. If these live after the flesh, if they renounce their covenant of sacrifice, they will die. But if they mortify, or kill, the deeds of the flesh and abandon this wholly for the Spirit, they shall live--have everlasting life. We all see that in our Lord Jesus, holy, harmless, undefiled, there was such a contrast; the earthly interests drawing one way, and the Heavenly interests another. These were all pure and perfect desires; nevertheless, as the New Creature, begotten of the Holy Spirit, He was obliged to overcome them.

We recall our Lord's words very near the conclusion of His ministry: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50.) The conflict was going on; but the Lord's spirit was firm, and He was obedient to the terms of His sacrifice. Being perfect, however, He could do those things that He would. He did them, and won the great victory.

In our case the matter is different. We are by nature fallen. Our earthly appetites and tastes are depraved. All are more or less selfish; some more depraved than are others.

Our flesh is depraved; we cannot do the things that we would. Hence we need the merit of Christ to assist us; hence the Apostle tells us that every time we as New Creatures have done wrong, we should acknowledge the error and go to the Throne of Heavenly Grace to obtain mercy and find help for future needs. Thus we show to God the loyalty of our hearts. All those having Christ's mind and disposition are hampered merely by the weaknesses of the flesh, the fallen flesh; but they have an Advocate, to whom they may go and have these weaknesses of the fallen flesh compensated for.

The question may arise, Why should there be any conflict between the flesh and the spirit in our case? and how do we overcome these weaknesses sufficiently to desire to become joint-sacrificers with Christ, before we are begotten of the Spirit at all? The answer is that while the whole race is fallen, many of the fallen ones realize the shame of their condition and long to do righteously, but are unable to do so. They find themselves to be slaves of sin. They are weak; they are so bound that they cannot do the things that they would. Many of the Jews were in this condition. They were desirous to do God's will, but were unable to do so. The desire was there, the will was there. But because of man's fallen condition there were other qualities of their mind in opposition.

The human mind is made up of various qualities. When sin came in, the lower and baser of these qualities of the original man gained the ascendancy, and the nobler of these qualities gradually became effaced, until the original likeness of God was measurably gone from humanity.

But in some of the sons and daughters of Adam there is sufficient of the original God-likeness to oppose sin and to seek to have reformation of life. Such good influences are manifest even amongst the heathen.

During the Jewish Age, some amongst the Jews were

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seeking to live in harmony with God. Others were following the course of Belial, and serving Satan and giving themselves up to selfishness. And so it is today. The Jews could not keep their Law, and unless they could keep the Law perfectly, they would fail of getting everlasting life, just the same as those who had never been under the Law. Since Pentecost there has been a different arrangement. God has provided a Savior, whose death is efficacious for the sins of the world.

THE CONFLICT ENDS WITH DEATH

Why, then, has this death not yet been effective for the world? God is wishing to find a class willing to lay down life itself in God's service. Some of these fallen children of Adam, noting the call of God's Word--to become footstep-followers of Jesus--have enough strength of character to follow in Christ's footsteps. They manifest their determination by consecrating their lives to His service. Such a consecration means that the higher qualities of the mind have united, and have gotten control, of the lower qualities of the mind, putting them under constraint.

Under the inspiring influence of God's promises and the Message of the Gospel, they are through the great Advocate received as members of His Body--as New Creatures in Christ, begotten of the Holy Spirit. Thenceforth they have a relationship with God. They are expected then to go forward from step to step, continually fighting against the snares of Satan. This is the Christian's life--the battle mentioned in our text. The two influences --the flesh and the Spirit--are contrary; hence the conflict.

There is no need to go outside and battle with others. There is plenty to do within. Happy are those who, by their endeavors, show their loyalty to God! In due time, by the power of the First Resurrection, they will lose the old body altogether and will be clothed upon with immortality. If we are "faithful unto death," we shall be like Him, our Lord and Head, see Him as He is, and share His glory.

There is, however, a great and continuous battle; for although the new will asserts itself, puts the body under and compels its subjection to the new mind, nevertheless, the mortal body, not being actually dead, is continually coming in contact with the world and the Adversary, and is continually being stimulated by these and by earthly cares, ambitions, methods, strivings, conflicts, to insubordination

to our new will.

No saint is without experience of this kind--fightings without and within. It must be a fight to the finish, or the great prize for which we fight will not be gained. For although the New Creature, by the Lord's grace and strength, repeatedly masters the mortal body, nevertheless, until death there can be no cessation of the conflict.

"How goes the fight with thee?
The life-long battle 'gainst all evil things?
Thine no low strife, and thine no selfish aim;
It is the war of giants and of kings!

* * *

"Say not the fight is long;
'Tis but one battle and the fight is o'er;
No second warfare mars thy victory,
And the one triumph is for evermore!"

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DISCERNING THE WILL OF GOD

"Teach me Thy way, O Lord."--Psalm 27:11.

THE LORD does not wish us to walk by sight, and thus to have no difficulty in discerning His will. Therefore He puts matters in such a way that both our obedience and our perseverance are tested; for we are to walk by faith and not by sight. In order to do this, we should daily take everything to the Lord in prayer. We should not undertake anything without seeking to know the will of the Lord respecting the matter.

Since, however, we have no miraculous insight through which we may know what is the will of God in all the details of every-day life, we are not always able to discern that will. When the matter is one about which the Scriptures give instructions, then the way is clear; for the only course which the child of God desires to follow is that of obedience. But when the matter is such as depends upon one's own judgment, then the way is not so clear. Realizing that our judgment is not sufficient, we should not tax our minds with what we know is beyond our power to decide, but should leave the matter to the Lord.

We know that the Lord can direct our course in whatever way He chooses, if we put ourselves under His care. So at the beginning of the day we can say, "Lord, here am I; I thank Thee for the privilege of another day, which I hope will be full of opportunities for serving the Truth and the brethren. I ask Thee to direct my thoughts, words and conduct, that I may serve Thee acceptably."

Then we may go forth and use our best judgment.

If the Lord wants to lead us in one direction or another, that is His part, not ours. We have solicited His guidance; and our eyes are alert to know and to do His will at any cost. In this attitude we may rest easy, knowing that God is able and willing to overrule all things for His glory and our profit.

As a child, the Editor noticed that some people had a certain way of going to the Lord with all of their affairs. They would open their Bibles at random; and whatever verse their thumb or finger happened to touch they would consider to be the Lord's message to them; and they would follow its suggestion carefully. Sometimes the text to which they opened seemed to be a remarkable answer to their prayer.

This method is not one with which the Editor desires to find fault. But since it did not appeal to his judgment, he took the matter to the Lord in prayer and said, "Father, I am really afraid to adopt this plan. So if it please Thee, I would rather be directed by my judgment than by this method; for my mind does not seem capable of accepting it." The Lord seems to have taken him at his word.

There is surely a reason why right is right in every matter; and we should desire to know it. We should desire to know why God wishes a matter this way rather than that way; not that we doubt His wisdom, but that we may enter into the spirit of the Divine regulations. The Editor's method of seeking Divine guidance is to study the Scriptures, taking all of the verses bearing upon the subject under consideration, and trying to find the underlying principle of God's dealings and teachings.

By this method he has much more happiness than he otherwise could have. By following the other method he could not know whether God or the Devil or chance would open the Bible for him. He much prefers to follow what he believes to be the teaching of the Word of God; that is, to commit all to the Father in prayer, asking Him to guide both reason and judgment, and then go out

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and use that judgment and reason to the best of his ability. Even if God should permit him to use his judgment in a way that afterward appeared not to have been the best, nevertheless the Father may use it to bring some great blessing or profitable lesson. By judgment, of course, he means his understanding of the Father's Word and of His providential leadings. Thus doing, he knows that all things shall work together for good.--Rom. 8:28.

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THE ONENESS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit."--I Corinthians 12:12,13.

WE ARE all baptized by one Spirit into one Body. The figure of a human body of many members, operating together for the general good and for the accomplishment of one general purpose, one work, is a mental picture that is very generally made use of by the whole world. It is not confined to the Church. In our own country we speak of the President, our Chief Executive, as the Head of the Government. We speak of the Congressional Body and the Senatorial Body, and of the co-operation of the various members of these bodies in a work for the general good.

The specially called out of God's people during this Gospel Age, whether they be called out from amongst the Jews or from amongst the Gentiles, are of one Body, because the Body is one, and not a divided Body. In this respect, the Body of Christ is different from the political bodies of today. In the United States, for instance, there are the Republican party and the Democratic party.

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They are not united in the most desirable sense. But the Lord says, through the Apostle, that the Church is one Body of Christ, that many members compose this one Body, and that all the members are related to each other.

The members of the Body of Christ all have one work, one purpose, or object, in view, and one method by which to attain that purpose. They are called to a special service --that they may show forth the praises of God. The world is seeking to show forth the praises of king or queen or sect or what not. But this class have but one aim and object in life--to serve God. They are His representatives in the world.

God is the real Emperor, or Ruler, of the Universe. But His subjects in this part of His Dominion are under a curse of death. He does not intend to leave them in this condition. He intends to roll away this curse eventually and to bring them a blessing.

Many who in the past heard of this purpose did not understand; and many who understood found their hopes grow faint, as the time was long. The Scriptures say that God's plans will not fail; that His present Plan is the election, or selection, of the Church, and that the purpose of the election of the Church is for the blessing of the non-elect. God had this purpose in mind from before the foundation of the world, and He will carry it out. The Church is being chosen that they may be associated with

the Son of God, the Logos, the Mediator, in His Kingdom.

THE ONENESS OF THE BODY ILLUSTRATED

Those who are now called out all receive a begetting of the Holy Spirit. They are all baptized by the one Spirit into the one Body. His members are fellow-sharers in the suffering of this present time. They are to be fellow-sharers in the glories that are to follow. So the Apostle is here dilating on this particular phase of the subject. One member cannot say to another, "You are not needed"; for God hath set the members every one of them in the Body as has pleased Him. And the Body would not be complete without every one of them, unless one should fail to make his calling and election sure.

With this view of matters, we should be very sympathetic with each other. There is no division in the human body. Yet one hand is separate from the other hand; there is a separation between the hand and the foot. But there is a work for every part of the body to do. The hand and the foot are connected through the head. The brain is in touch with all parts of the body through the nerves. Nourishment passes from the central stations to the various parts of the body. So it is in the spiritual Body. We are not all doing the same thing. God has a variety of things to be done. He gives one a work to do in this department, He gives another work to do in another department.

The Apostle proceeds to say that if one member suffer, all the other members come to its relief. If one member of the Body of Christ suffer, all the other members suffer with it. And no member can be in ill condition without the knowledge and sympathy of the Head Member, Christ. Our Lord said to Saul of Tarsus, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." When Saul was persecuting some of the members of the Church, he was persecuting Jesus. Whether it is a member living back in Jesus' day or one living today, it is the one Body. There is one God and Father of all, one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and one Holy Spirit by which all are to be controlled and guided.

It is blessed to mark this oneness between Christ Jesus and the members of His Body. Our Lord does not selfishly grasp all the glory and seek to retain it for Himself. On the contrary, with loving solicitude He marks the progress of His Body-members as they develop in character-likeness to Himself, and says, "They are Mine; and I am glorified in them" (John 17:10); and He would have them all bound up together with Himself in the Father's Love. He would also have them with Himself, beholding and sharing the glory which the Father has conferred upon Him as a reward for His loyalty and obedience throughout all the crucial testings which came upon Him.

All the Divine family are bound together in one bond of love and fellowship and confidence and sympathy and

harmony and common interest; and the honor and glory of one are the honor and glory of all. The Lord's prayer abounds with petitions for this oneness. Mark the expression --"That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, are in Me and I in Thee" [Thy Spirit, or disposition, and purposes and aim being common to us all]. (John 17:21.) Hence He would have us adopt the same Father's Spirit, aim and purpose, and devote all our powers with zeal and faithfulness to the accomplishment of the Father's will.

Be not men's servant: think what costly price
Was paid that thou might'st His own bondsman be,
Whose service perfect freedom is. Let this
Hold fast thy heart. His claim is great to thee.
All His are thine to serve: Christ's brethren here
Are needing aid, in them thou servest Him.
The least of all is still His member dear,
The weakest cost His life-blood to redeem.

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THE GOSPEL OF HOPE

FOLLOWING our public address at Havana, a lady of some prominence came forward and expressed herself as greatly pleased with what she had heard. She said she appreciated the hopeful outlook which we had held before the audience respecting God's Love and care, and the comforts of the Truth in the present life, and the hopes respecting the future life.

"But," said this lady, "I wish, Pastor Russell, that you could inoculate THE WATCH TOWER readers with this same spirit of hope breathed in your discourses. I am well acquainted with some who are deeply interested in your presentations of the Bible teachings, but who seem to lose sight of the hope and the good things, being chiefly impressed with matters that are very doleful and discouraging. They seem to dwell upon a coming time of trouble to such an extent as to make both themselves and others about them sad. I believe that if they could be inoculated with more of the spirit of hope in respect to the future, they could be much happier themselves and make others about them much happier. I believe that they would really make much more progress in the propagation of the Truth, if indeed your presentations are the Truth, as they seem to be." We promised to lay the matter before THE WATCH TOWER readers, and are now doing so.

YE HAVE NEED OF HOPE

The Apostle wrote, "Ye have need of patience." We are not contradicting his statement when we add that also, "Ye have need of hope." Without hope, patience would soon fritter away; and no length or breadth or depth of character could be expected. The very word Gospel is full of hope; for it means Good Tidings. Whoever, therefore, would preach the Gospel should be sure that his message is one of Good Tidings, one of Hope. True, it may be necessary and appropriate at times to say something respecting the time of trouble that we see near. Yet even that subject is to be approached from the standpoint of Good Tidings. To tell about the time of trouble merely to alarm people, would not be to use it as a part of the Good Tidings. If necessary to refer to the time of trouble, we should mention it merely as that dark cloud which for a little season will obscure the dawn of the rapidly oncoming Day of Christ--the Day of blessing and joy--the world's jubilee--the time of rolling away the curse and substituting God's blessing.

"THE WHOLE CREATION GROANETH"

The majority of the world and also of the Lord's consecrated people have plenty of trouble in the present time without being terrorized needlessly in respect to the great day of trouble. Let us remember that, additionally, the world has a latent fear respecting the future. They have been told by distinguished religious teachers and by musty creeds that nearly everybody was damned in advance to spend an eternity of torture. And although this is no longer outwardly preached to intelligent people, and no longer would be believed, nevertheless insinuations are often thrown out; and a secret fear lurks in the mind lest there should really be something terrible awaiting the masses after death--a Catholic Purgatory of awful severity, if not the endless torture of Protestantism. Much of the present day tendency toward intoxication with pleasures and travels, as well as with alcoholic intoxicants, is the result of an attempt to get away from fearful forebodings --to substitute more pleasant and happifying thoughts.

What the world specially needs is what the Bible alone can give. Bible Students alone are qualified to introduce others to this comfort of the Scriptures. More and more, therefore, it should be our aim to bind up the broken-hearted and to say to the weary and heavy-laden, "Come to Christ, and find relief and rest. Come now, and see who is the great Burden-bearer for all who become His followers. Then look beyond the present and see how, in harmony with the Father's gracious arrangement, He will eventually scatter the blessings of Restitution far and wide. Behold the Love of God, which constraineth us! Cast away your fear of Him! Draw nigh unto Him through Christ, and He will draw nigh unto you."

As there may be proper times for telling something

about the time of trouble coming, which will inaugurate Messiah's glorious reign, so there may be proper times

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for telling the wayward that those who sin shall suffer; that walking in the ways of sin they are walking away from God; that the end of that way is death--the Second Death; and that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." But these features of the Divine Word are not so necessary to be repeated every day; for mankind instinctively know that sin leads to suffering of some kind, and that righteousness sooner or later brings its reward.

What the world needs most is encouragement to turn away from sin, to realize the sympathy of God for the rebellious family of Adam, and to know of the arrangement which God has made whereby He will have mercy upon all, through Christ. We need to follow the Master's course when He declared, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." We need to tell those who see and hear what a blessing they enjoy.

It is necessary at times to point to the narrow way of self-sacrifice, self-denial, suffering, which the followers of Jesus must take if they would share with Him in His Kingdom glories, honors and immortality. But they will find the narrowness of the way, even if we should not tell them. No one can walk in the narrow way, no one can follow Jesus, without knowing the truth of the statement, "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

What then shall we tell the people? Oh, give them also the Message of hope, the Message of joy, the Message of peace! Let us draw the attention of the brethren to the blessed privileges that are ours, rather than frequently to point them to the trials and hardships of the way. But what are the privileges of the Christian, if through great tribulation he must enter the Kingdom? They are, oh, so grand! It is his to know the joy of sins forgiven; and many need to have this told them over and over again, that they may fully appreciate it. It is his to know of the Heavenly Father's Love and care--matters so easily forgotten in the stress of life. These assurances of the Word need to be repeated over and over: "The Father Himself loveth you." "God is for us." "All things shall work together for good to them that love God."

As these promises of God's Word abound in our hearts, they promote the fruits of the Holy Spirit; joy and peace come in, such as the world can neither give nor take away. The peace of God, which passeth all human understanding, thus gradually comes more and more to dwell in our hearts; and so thankfulness results. Thankfulness in turn leads to more joy and praise, and to more sympathy for our fellows--for our families and for the world. Thus the Christian finds himself growing in grace, knowledge

and love.

"THINK ON THESE THINGS"

All this is in full accord with St. Paul's advice:
"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest,

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whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8.) Following this course then--of preaching the Gospel of Hope--we are following the Master and the Apostles. They had so much of this spirit of hope, trust, confidence, love, joy and peace, that they could rejoice in tribulation; and they did so. The Apostles even sang praise to God that they were accounted worthy to share in the sufferings of Christ, that they might also share in His coming glories.

Let us then, dear brethren, realize that the world has tears and sorrows enough, and fears aplenty. Let us more and more use our time, strength, talents, joys, etc., in relieving the poor world of its mental distress. Hearken to the words of Jesus, "God shall wipe all tears from all eyes." "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." As it will be God's great work in the future, through Christ and the Church, to wipe away earth's tears, let us chase away some of those fears at the present time. Thus we shall help to prepare the way for the world to come back into fellowship with God by and by, for the faithful of the present time to walk more carefully in the footsteps of Jesus and to encourage one another in the good way.

GETHSEMANE

I journeyed through the twilight
Where all was dark and drear,
And wondered why my Savior
Did not seem always near.
As steeper grew the pathway
And full of thorns the road,
I stumbled, deaf and blinded,
Beneath my heavy load.

The tears of my own grieving
Had filled mine eyes with mist,
And thro' the vapory veiling
The face of Christ I missed.
At last I fixed my vision
On Heavenly Heights of Love,
Whose tips were ever glowing

In sunlight from above.

And wandering thus, up-gazing,
I earnestly pressed on,
Unheeding thorns and thistles
By which my feet were torn.
At last, worn out and weary,
I fell upon the ground.
Where, worn by time and tempest,
A granite cross I found.

I leaned my head upon it,
My all on it I laid;
Together with my sorrows,
My joys I also gave.
Then suddenly a rustling
Of pinions filled the air,
And lo! beside me kneeling
I saw an Angel there.
And midnight in the Garden
Was bright as day to me,
For Christ stood 'mid the shadows
Of my Gethsemane!
BIRLA I. MORRIS.

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HATED WITHOUT A CAUSE

--APRIL 27.--GENESIS 37.--

"Love Envieth Not."--1 Corinthians 13:4.

THE STORY of Joseph and his brethren, beautiful in its simplicity as a narrative, is deeply interesting and instructive, from various viewpoints. One lesson would be the unwisdom of a parent in showing too great a preference for one child above another, and thus cultivating amongst the children a spirit of envy. Another lesson would be along the line of the unwisdom of telling even our dreams to unsympathetic ears: as when Joseph told his dreams to his brethren. In the one dream, he saw eleven shocks of wheat bow down to one shock, which was his. In the other dream, he saw the sun, the moon and the eleven stars all doing homage to him.

Joseph was not to be blamed for having these dreams. Unlike the majority of dreams, they apparently came not from indigestion, but were from the Lord. Joseph was not even to blame for artlessly telling the dream to his brethren; and evidently this was the very thing which the Lord intended should be done. The Lord foreknew the jealousy of Joseph's brethren, and how envy would be cultivated

in their minds; and He gave the opportunity for it; for He had already mapped out Joseph's subsequent experiences, which the envy of his brethren merely helped to accomplish.

We may, however, learn the lesson that in general it is the part of wisdom to keep to one's self truths not necessary for another to know which might merely arouse opposition. Jesus encouraged this very thought, saying, "Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they turn again and injure you." Very deep truths connected with the Divine Plan and with Christian hopes had better not be told to others than those for whom they are intended by the Lord--namely, the meek.

JOSEPH A TYPE OF MESSIAH

The most important feature of today's Bible Study is that which in addition to all that we have suggested, recognizes Joseph as a type, or prophetic picture of Christ, the Messiah. Joseph was kind to his brethren and was on an errand of mercy to them when their envy plotted his death, and later on sold him into slavery in Egypt. His brethren hated him without a cause--merely because he was good, because his father loved him, and because God in the dreams foreshadowed his coming exaltation.

Joseph's brethren should have said, "Let us rejoice that we have so noble a brother. Let us rejoice if it be God's will that he should be very highly exalted. God's Promise made to our grandfathers, Abraham and Isaac, and to our father Jacob, may thus be reaching a fulfilment. Let God's blessings come in whatever way He sees best. We will rejoice with our brother, as we see that he is pleasing to God and to our father Jacob. We will seek more and more to copy his character." But they were envious to the point of cruelty, first resolving to murder him, and later, merely as an alternative, to sell him as a slave.

"THEY HATED HIM WITHOUT A CAUSE"

But God's providence continued with Joseph and blessed him as a slave, and through much tribulation finally brought him to the throne of Egypt--next in influence and power to Pharaoh himself. Then it was that the famine of the land drove Joseph's brethren to Egypt to buy wheat. Thus was fulfilled his dream--that his

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brethren bow down, as illustrated in the eleven sheaves which bowed down before his.

Later on when his father and the entire family came into Egypt to live in Goshen, they all did obeisance to Joseph, as the representative of the Egyptian Government, thus fulfilling the second dream. But all of these experiences were at the time dark. They all looked as though the Lord had less love for Joseph than for any others of

his family, until the time came for his exaltation to the throne. Then everything changed.

"WHICH THINGS ARE AN ALLEGORY"

The allegorical meaning of all this, as applied to Joseph, is that he was also hated without a cause. We read in Psalm 69:4, "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head." Jesus quoted this statement and applied it to Himself, saying, "They hated Me without a cause." (John 15:25.) The brethren of Jesus were the Jews, who crucified Him. But there was no cause of death found in Him.

We perceive that it was for envy that they delivered Him up and called for His crucifixion, because His works were good and theirs were evil; because he taught the way of the Lord more perfectly than they; because He declared to them that the time would come when they and all others would recognize Him as the Messiah--coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory--and would bow the knee to Him.

As with Joseph, disaster, treachery and shame prepared the way for glory and honor on the throne of Egypt, so with Jesus. His trying experiences proved Him loyal to God and led onward to His exaltation to the right hand of Divine Majesty. St. Paul refers to this, saying of Jesus, "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2.) Again he says, "Though He was rich, for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9), even as the experiences of Joseph--all of his humiliation--prepared the way for him to be succored and honored by Pharaoh. Again we read of Jesus, that "He learned obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect [through suffering], He became the Author of eternal salvation to all those that obey Him."--Hebrews 5:9.

"IF WE SUFFER WITH HIM"

The Scriptures assure us that in God's great Plan, not only Jesus is to be exalted to the Throne as the world's Messiah, but with Him is to be a company of brethren, sharers of the same glory, honor and immortality. And these brethren, in God's great Purpose, are required to pass through similar experiences to those of their Elder Brother Jesus. Their experiences, therefore, are illustrated also in Joseph's experiences. They are not on an equality with their Elder Brother. He is designated their Head, their Chief, the Captain of their salvation. So we read again, that God, "in bringing many sons to glory, made the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."--Hebrews 2:10.

And all of the company of sons received under this great Captain must similarly be perfected through

sufferings.

Does not this account for the trying experiences of the Church during the past nineteen centuries? The Apostle John declares, "As He was, so are we, in this world"; and again, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." As Joseph's brethren were blind to the fact that their brother would be their savior from famine, as well as the savior of the Egyptians, so the world fails to realize that only through The Messiah will any have eternal life.

In the very same connection in which Jesus mentions that He was hated without a cause, He plainly forewarns all of His elect followers that they must similarly expect to be hated unjustly. We read, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. ...But this cometh to pass that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their Law, They hated Me without a cause."--John 15:18-25.

We give in full the same text from which our Lord quoted, "They that hate Me without a cause are more than the hairs of Mine head...Let not them that wait on Thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for My sake; let not those that seek Thee be confounded for My sake, O God of Israel. Because for Thy sake I have borne reproach: shame hath covered My face. I am become a stranger unto My brethren, and an alien unto My mother's children. For the zeal of Thine house hath eaten Me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon Me. Reproach hath broken My heart; and I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave Me also gall for My meat; and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink."--Psalm 69:4-9,20,21.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE FACTS

We have considered the facts--that Jesus and all of His followers, according to Divine intention, have suffered shame and contempt. We perceive that, in the case of Jesus and of the early Church, the persecution came from their brethren according to the flesh--from the Jews. And since then, all the way down the Gospel Age, the persecutions of the Church, the brethren of Jesus, the Household of Faith, have come from their brethren, too. These brethren are not Jews, but Christians. As the Jewish religionists in Jesus' day persecuted their more righteous brethren, so since then nominal Christians have been the chief persecutors of the Lord's faithful followers.

This persecution has come upon faithful souls of

nearly every denomination. And, sad to say, this persecution has come from unfaithful souls of nearly every denomination. Presbyterians, Covenanters, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, Methodists and Baptists have all endured persecutions from blinded brethren; and blinded ones amongst themselves have also shared in the persecuting work. In nearly every case the profession has been made that the persecuting was done for the glory of God. Thus the Lord through the Prophet expresses the matter, saying, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified! But He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."--Isaiah 66:5.

Already the world in general, including the Jews, realize that a great mistake was made in persecuting Jesus unto death. Already to some extent similar transgressions against the faithful followers of Jesus have been recognized. And yet the same blindness, from the same envious disposition, leads on to persecution even in our day.

The majority admit that they do not know very distinctly much about God or much about the Bible. They

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pray for light, and sing, "Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom." And yet, if any light appear, if any voice of love or tenderness be heard, directing toward the dawning of the New Day, and pointing out with clearness the riches of God's grace and the lengths and breadths of His mercy, immediately their songs for light cease, and their stones of ridicule and slander are hurled. And why? Lest peradventure there should be any change; lest any one should get further light; lest the Divine promise should be fulfilled, and a new Dawn should be ushered in.

But what is the philosophy of these facts of history? Why has God permitted, yea, ordained that Christ should suffer, and that all who would walk in His steps must share in His experiences of ignominy and shame and reproach --suffering with Him? In Jesus' case, the Father used the trying experiences to test the love and loyalty of His Son, and to demonstrate His obedience to angels and to men. Intending to confer upon Him very great glory and honor, the Father would have all to see, as He saw it, the worthiness of the Logos, subsequently Jesus.

In a symbolical picture the Heavenly hosts are represented as acknowledging the propriety of the high exaltation of Jesus, because of His faithfulness unto death, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." And if such a demonstration of the worthiness of Jesus, the Logos, was necessary or proper, much more necessary would it seem that an elect Church, being gathered from amongst a fallen race, should be proven loyal to God to the very last--even unto death. There is a difference, however.

In the case of the Master, it was a demonstration that He was perfect before He left the Heavenly glory, and perfect also when He became the Man Christ Jesus--"holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." "In Him was no sin." In the case of His followers, the imperfection of the flesh still remains; but they are judged, not according to the weaknesses of their flesh--of heredity--but according to the love and zeal of their hearts. And this loving zeal is witnessed to by their endeavor to walk faithfully in the footsteps of their Leader and Savior, overcoming to the best of their ability the weaknesses of their flesh, and "showing forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light."

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AFFLICTED, YET A COMFORTER

--MAY 4.--GENESIS 40 AND 41.--

"God giveth grace to the humble."--1 Peter 5:5.

JOSEPH may well be designated the model young man of Old Testament times. In some respects, he would be a model for any time. There is a distinction to be made, however. Joseph lived before the time of spirit-begetting, and hence was merely a natural man, not a Christian. He lived before the time of Bibles, before the time of preaching and Sunday Schools. He merely inherited from his father a strong faith in the God of Abraham, who had promised that, ultimately, a blessing should come to all people through Jacob's posterity. Joseph, who was one of that family, revered God and sought to live humbly, nobly. His faithfulness to God and his trust in God's Promise served as a rudder to guide and direct all the affairs of his life. Whatsoever he did was with a view to pleasing God and winning His approval.

Such faithfulness was probably rare at that time, as it is today, and the reward came in Joseph's advancement to the highest station in the house of his master--that of steward. His conscientiousness led him to be careful, economical and wise; and his master could and did entrust everything to his care. Young men of Joseph's type are very much valued everywhere today--yea, they have been valued in every period of the world's history--trustworthy men, faithful men, economical men, wise men; and all these qualities go with godliness--with faith in God, and a realization of responsibility to Him.

But just in the height of Joseph's prosperity, calamity

came. His steadfastness to principle angered his mistress. She falsely accused him; and he was cast into prison and made to appear guilty of a heinous crime, disloyal to his master and benefactor. Yet all the while he was innocent; but only God and himself knew of that innocence. The Adversary had made circumstantial evidence to appear so strong that Joseph's guilt was not questioned. The poet Shakespeare noted this trait of human weakness in these words: "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned."

How strange it seems that God would allow so terrible a blight to fall upon the life of one who was seeking to walk in the ways of righteousness! We can imagine Joseph's querying why this evil had befallen him, and saying with the Prophet, "They that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered; while those who seek to live righteously suffer persecution."

But evidently Joseph did not permit himself to question the Wisdom of Divine Providence which took him to prison in Egypt any more than he allowed himself to question the Wisdom of the same Providence in permitting him to be sold a slave into Egypt. His faith in God endured the test. He became stronger as he found himself shut away from all earthly hopes and ambitions--dead to the world. The more did he cultivate faith in the Almighty; the more did he determine that at any cost he would live righteously, soberly, reverentially. Even in prison, his faithfulness, intelligence and general goodness were recognized. He became the prison keeper's trusty man and assistant. Such a character, no matter how much traduced, misrepresented and slandered, eventually will commend itself to those with whom it has close contact. And the principle holds good today, as then.

DREAMS OF BUTLER AND BAKER

The prison regulations of old were less methodical than at present. Joseph had been in prison for years, had probably been forgotten, and might have continued there indefinitely, had not something occurred to bring his case to official notice. When he was twenty-eight years old, two high officials were thrust into prison because Pharaoh had taken some offence at their conduct. One of these was the king's secretary and butler, or cup-bearer. The other was head of his culinary department.

Joseph, as the general overseer of the prison, came in contact with these men, noted their sadness of face and tendered sympathy. What a noble example! Instead of moping about, bemoaning his lot, Joseph was cheerful, trusting in God and waiting for some circumstance by which God would eventually open up the way before him. Such a noble character can always find time to speak a word of consolation to those in trouble! What an example to worldly men of today! What an example to Christian

men of today, who have much advantage over him in so many ways.

There are some who tell us that our race is rising so rapidly from brute nature by evolutionary processes, that impliedly Joseph, living nearly four thousand years ago--two thousand years after Adam's creation--would be almost a brute, only a few removes from the monkey. But how different a view is given of him by this little narrative, which makes no attempt to pointing a moral with his experiences, but merely records them as matters of fact!

When Joseph learned that the two official prisoners were troubled because of impressive dreams, he volunteered interpretations. The one was encouraging, and the other discouraging. He told the butler that within three days he would be back again in favor with the king, but informed the baker that within three days he would be executed. Then Joseph, mindful of the fact that he had a duty to perform in respect to attaining his own liberty, urged upon the butler--the one he had so encouraged and befriended--that when at liberty he would remember his comforter and do something to bring Joseph's case before proper authorities, that he might be heard and, if possible, be released.

But alas, for the hardness of heart so prevalent! The butler forgot all about Joseph, his prisoner friend, for two years! Then the matter was brought to his attention by Pharaoh's dream; for none of the wise men of Egypt were able to interpret it. With apologies for his neglect, the butler told the king of the dream experiences of the baker and himself in prison and of the wonderful young man Joseph, who by some god-given power had interpreted their dreams, just as these turned out.

During those two years, Joseph doubtless hoped much and waited longingly for some adjustment of his case. We doubt not that, instead of growing faint in respect to his faith in God, he all the more earnestly laid hold upon the Lord, and realized that his experiences must be for good. And so they were; for it was when Joseph was just thirty years of age--when he had just reached manhood under the old-time law--that Pharaoh sent for him to interpret his dreams, and rewarded him very highly.

PHARAOH'S DREAMS INTERPRETED

Pharaoh related his two dreams. In the first he saw seven fine, strong cattle, and a little later the same number of very poor, lean cattle--the worst he had ever seen. In the dream, the lean cattle ate up the fat ones, and looked none the better. In the second dream, the king saw a fine stalk of corn grow up out of the earth, bearing seven full, healthy ears of corn; and then he saw another stalk with seven withered ears, good for nothing. The latter swallowed up the former, and looked none the better.

Young Joseph quickly gave the explanation of the dreams; but before doing so, he very distinctly told the

king that the interpretation came not from himself, but from God. Thus he exemplified the Scriptural teaching, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him," and "He shall give thee the desires of thine heart."--Prov. 3:6; Psalm 37:4.

Joseph explained that the two dreams referred to the same matter--that unitedly they taught that there would be seven years of great plenty in the land of Egypt; and that these would be followed by seven years of famine, which would fully consume all the surplus of the plentiful years. Proceeding, Joseph offered the suggestion that God evidently meant this information to be used by Pharaoh, and recommended that, forthwith, a special agent of the king should be appointed to buy up all the surplus grain in the seven years of plenty and to store it for use during the seven years of famine.

Pharaoh very wisely acceded, and with manifestation of great breadth of mind and desire to serve the interests of his people, promptly appointed Joseph himself to be the purchaser of the surplus corn of the years of plenty, to have full charge of the matter and to attend to its disbursement in the following years of famine.

Thus Joseph stepped out of prison into a fourteen years' contract. From suffering because of slander he suddenly stepped into a place of highest authority, next to Pharaoh, in the greatest empire of those days. Can we doubt that God's hand was in the matter of Joseph's success and exaltation? Surely not! Nor should we infer any lack of Divine favor in Joseph's experiences of adversity.

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On the contrary, we may feel sure that the lessons of his adversity were merely preparations for his subsequent experiences as Pharaoh's logos, or mouthpiece, throughout the kingdom.

We are reminded again of the lesson of a week ago--that Joseph's experiences were typical of those of Jesus and the Church, His followers. The Bible assures us that the graces of humility and patience are both closely related to love and loyalty. St. Paul reminds us of this when he declares, "If ye be without chastisement,...then are ye...not sons. For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" He reminds us that "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."--Hebrews 12:6-8.

It was so with Jesus, and with all the faithful Apostles, and has been so with all the followers of Jesus during this Gospel Age. It will undoubtedly continue to be true in the case of all the consecrated Church. It is because the Lord Jesus loves these noble characters that He counts them worthy of trials and testings, disciplines, etc. These are necessary to qualify them for the positions of honor, glory, immortality and great responsibility, to which the Father has called Jesus and His brethren, the Church.

THE VALUE OF ADVERSITY

Jacob's special love for his son Joseph manifested itself in favoritism--the princely coat, or robe, etc. Quite possibly he would have spoiled his son, had not Divine Providence interfered and taken him entirely out of this father's control. Many fathers, especially the rich, have made similar mistakes. Hence the sons of the rich are not always a credit to their fathers.

The great Heavenly Father, however, makes no such mistakes. His people are assured that trials and difficulties are marks rather of their relationship to God and of His loving care over them. True, this providential care is restricted: "The Lord knoweth them that are His." His special dealings are with His consecrated people--those who have entered into a covenant with Him, who have become His servants and His children. To these alone belongs the promise that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."--Romans 8:28.

While this special call applies peculiarly to the Church of this Gospel Age, there is a sense in which it was applicable to the Hebrews, since the time of Abraham. Joseph belonged to this line which was in covenant relationship with God. This accounts for God's dealing with him rather than with young men of other families than Abraham's. Incidentally, it is worthy of notice that the Israelites passed through many trying experiences because of being God's people. Many of those experiences they might have escaped, had they not come into covenant relationship with God. But had they escaped the trials

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and difficulties, they would have escaped certain privileges and blessings also. And the blessings which God gives always outweigh the adversities which prepare for them.

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN ELECTIONS

This reminds us that the Bible declares that the Jewish people, and subsequently the Christians, are God's Elect--God's Chosen People--the Seed of Abraham, natural and Spiritual. Both have offers of God's blessings not accorded to other peoples; and in both cases the trying experiences are to fit the elect ones for the future glories to which they have been invited.

Nevertheless, God has also a great blessing in store for the non-elect. During the thousand years of Messiah's reign, the elect Church, the saintly only, will be Messiah's joint-heirs in the great Kingdom of God, which will then take control of the earth. Then also the Elect from the Hebrews will be used, in another part of the work, in conjunction with the Christian Church, the one on the Heavenly plane, the other on the earthly. Through these two Israels, God's blessings are to be poured out on all nations, kindreds, peoples and tongues.

Although God has not specially supervised the affairs of any except these two elect classes, nevertheless we see that He has permitted, in a general way, great lessons of adversity to come to the whole human family. As the special trials and difficulties of the elect classes are intended to work for them special blessing and qualifications for their work as God's agencies, so the general tribulations of the world will give general lessons that will be helpful to all people by giving all experiences with sin and death--by teaching all thus the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

By and by, when Messiah's Kingdom shall be established, when Satan shall be bound, when the reign of righteousness shall begin, when the curse shall be lifted, when the blessing shall flow instead--then the lessons of sorrow and tears and crying and dying will all prove valuable. Humanity will appreciate the great blessings of God in the future very largely by contrast with the evils and sorrows of the present time. When, by and by, they shall learn fully and conclusively that all these sorrows and tears are the results of violation of God's laws and disregard of His injunctions, the lesson undoubtedly will be one that will never be forgotten.

Wherever the plowshare of trouble has gone, it has served to break up the fallow ground and to make ready for the seed of Divine Truth and grace. The next Age, under Messiah's beneficent rule, will be the time of sowing the seeds of knowledge of God and appreciation of His glorious character and Plan. The results will undoubtedly be glorious, as the Scriptures declare. Eventually all will participate in these blessings everlastingly, except such as intelligently refuse them, choosing sin rather than righteousness, in that Day when the knowledge of the Truth will be given to all and when assistance to righteousness will be apparent.

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AN INTERESTING LETTER

THE SECRETARY, THE I.B.S.A.,

DEAR SIR:

Can you let me have a copy of "The Divine Plan of the Ages." Helping Hand series? I saw a copy in a cell of the Kandy Gaol today. The prisoner said it had been a great help and blessing to him. He had spent a fortnight of great darkness and doubt, but this book had cheered him up. Yours sincerely,

(Signed) ROBERT A. CLARKE,

Captain Salvation Army, Kandy, Ceylon.

The above is the result of a book placed in a prison library in India.

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BEREAN QUESTIONS IN SCRIPTURE STUDIES

Series VI., Study XIV.--Sundry Earthly
Obligations of the New Creation.

MAY 4

Read p. 568, par. 2, to p. 571, par. 1.

(13) What is the Scriptural injunction with respect to indorsing notes for others? P. 568, par. 2.

(14) How should the New Creation regulate their household affairs with respect to petty borrowing and lending, as between neighbors? P. 569, par. 1, 2.

(15) How should the borrowing of time by others be regarded by the New Creation? P. 570, par. 1.

(16) What beautiful example did our Lord set us with respect to waiting for a positive invitation and assurance of welcome before accepting hospitalities? P. 570, par. 2.

(17) To what extent should New Creatures permit themselves to be imposed upon by uninvited guests, whether "brethren" or relatives according to the flesh? P. 571, par. 1.

MAY 11

Read p. 572, par. 1, to p. 574, par. 3.

"TAKE NO THOUGHT FOR THE MORROW."

(18) Does Matthew 6:34,19,20, teach us to make no provision for the future? What example has the Heavenly Father set us in this respect? P. 572, par. 1.

(19) What is the proper interpretation of Matt. 6:34? P. 572, par. 2.

(20) What is the difference between carefulness and anxious care respecting the morrow, and how is this illustrated in Scripture? P. 573, par. 1.

(21) Does Matt. 6:19,20, imply carelessness in respect to the daily interests of the present life? P. 573, par. 2.

(22) How should all who have "chosen Christ" as their Master regard their earthly possessions? P. 573, par. 3; P. 574, par. 1.

(23) How should money be regarded by the New Creation? P. 574, par. 2, 3.

MAY 18

Read p. 575, par. 1, to p. 578, par. 1.

(24) What does full consecration to the Lord require of the poor as well as the rich? P. 575, par. 1.

(25) Suggest what further explanation our Lord might have given "the rich young man," had he possessed the proper heart-condition. P. 576, par. 1, 2.

(26) Does consecration of our all to the Lord imply that

all our means must be used exclusively in religious work?
P. 576, par. 3; P. 577, par. 1.

(27) What instructions do the Scriptures give with respect
to making future provision for our families? P. 577, par. 2.

(28) What is the duty of every parent with respect to
reasonable provision for his children's present and future
interests and necessities? P. 578, par. 1.

MAY 25

Read p. 578, par. 2, to p. 582, par. 2.

ORGANIZATIONS FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT.

(29) Is the question of Insurance a religious or a purely
business proposition? P. 578, par. 2.

(30) In a case where the wife is not in sympathy with
Present Truth, what course would be advisable on the part
of the husband? P. 579, par. 1.

(31) In view of the great Time of Trouble, what may
be expected of Insurance Companies, especially those of a
fraternal character? P. 579, par. 2; P. 580, par. 1.

(32) Should the New Creation become members of
Masonic or other secret societies? P. 580, par. 2; P. 581, par. 1.

(33) What liberty of choice may the New Creation exercise
in the matter of joining other mutual-benefit associations,
not of a religious nature? P. 581, par. 2.

(34) What advice is suggested regarding membership in
labor organizations? P. 582, par. 1, 2.

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PLEASE REMEMBER THESE THINGS

Give your full address at the top of each letter you write,
and please print it if you cannot write plainly. Please address
your communications to the WATCH TOWER SOCIETY, whether
in Brooklyn or London or Melbourne. Only very personal
matters should be addressed to the Editor--Pastor C. T.
RUSSELL. Our work here is different in the various departments;
for instance, the Pilgrim Department, the Colporteur
Department, the Volunteer Department, the Convention Committee,
etc. In case the subject matter of your letter makes
it specially appropriate to one or another of those Departments,
please add the same to the address, but always make
the main address the WATCH TOWER SOCIETY.

The general Convention season is approaching, and we desire
to know about how many to expect at each of the different
gatherings. We have purposely scattered them this year, so
that no one of them may be too large or unwieldy. Experience
shows that better spiritual results are obtained when the

crowd is not too large. We prefer Conventions ranging from a thousand to two thousand, rather than either larger or smaller ones. We have taken your interest into consideration in the arrangements, and hope that all may be pleased, and still more than usually profited. Scattering of the Conventions permits the attendance of some who could not so well be present at a greater distance from their homes, which would involve greater expense for travel.

We note again, as formerly, that no one should endeavor to attend a Convention expecting the cost to come under \$1.35 per day. We can procure rooms at fifty cents, or room and board for one dollar, in nearly every case, per day; but in some cases the board would not include luncheon. Of course, street car fare would be extra, and little incidentals should not be forgotten.

We are mentioning the lowest rate with more than one person in a room. A separate room will generally cost \$1.50 with board, and from that up to \$5.00 or more per day. We are solicitous for those who wish to economize. Others can always find accommodations. We would like to hear as quickly as possible from all the friends who anticipate attending Conventions this year. We want to know just how many to expect at the different places, and how many to attempt to provide for. Write, please, as soon as you conveniently can.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S LARGE MAIL

I wish to express my appreciation to the dear friends of THE WATCH TOWER list for their thousands of kind letters--some of them individual and some of them from Classes. These letters tell me of your love and that you are praying for me, and that you have absolute confidence in my integrity. It would afford me great pleasure to answer these kind communications, and to tell you all of my love for you. I reflect, however, that such personal answers would accomplish no real good, and that you all hear from me regularly twice a month through THE WATCH TOWER. I console myself with the thought that you will know that my time is being otherwise engaged in the Master's service, and that you will be fully content with the expression of your love, etc., without hearing from me in return--except in such cases as really require answers.

Very truly your brother and servant in the Lord,
C. T. RUSSELL.

STORM AND FLOOD SUFFERERS

Our Society's funds are strictly limited for spiritual services --providing spiritual food and the robe of Christ's righteousness.

However, some thoughtful brethren have provided a "Comfort Fund" under the care of Brother Russell. So far as it goes it is available for the temporal needs of any

WATCH TOWER readers who have suffered in recent storms. We will be glad to hear from such, either directly or through the I.B.S.A. class secretary.

THE WATCH TOWER SOCIETY will be glad to assist by making good losses of its publications. Advise at once.

1913--NEW VOLUNTEER MATTER--1913

All orders received will soon be filled. We are hoping for good results this year. Classes that have not sent in requests for Volunteer matter, please take notice.

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GOD'S SYMPATHY FOR HIS PEOPLE

"Thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."--Isaiah 57:15.

JEHOVAH is the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity. Before the mountains were brought forth, or the hills, before the First-born was created, He is God. To Moses at the burning bush, He said, "I AM THAT I AM." (Exodus 3:14.) Our God is very great, very wise, very high. Nevertheless, the Scriptures show us that He is also very sympathetic. He is a God of Mercy and of Love.

The passage from which our text is taken informs us that if God were to contend with humanity, the end of the strife would be that mankind would be blotted out of existence. But He remembers that we are dust, and has compassion upon us. In this respect He is different from the gods of the heathen, who are domineering, apparently bent on wreaking vengeance upon those in their power.

Besides being very great and lofty, our God is particularly sympathetic towards those who are of a broken and contrite heart, whose spirit is humble, who realize that they are imperfect, who desire to be in accord with Him, and to dwell in holiness. To such He is ever near--to revive the spirit of the humble, to give them strength. He will not trample them into the dust, as many an earthly potentate has done to his subjects, but will assist them in the right way, and revive the heart of the contrite. These are to know that our God is a God of sympathy, compassion and love, who takes pleasure in reviving their hearts and in bringing them back into harmony with Him, if they are willing to be led.

DISCOURAGEMENT WITH SELF A FAVORABLE CONDITION

There is a difference between a broken and a contrite heart. A heart is broken when it is bowed down with grief and sorrow; a heart is contrite when it has a quiet, deep, continual sorrow for acts not in harmony with righteousness. A broken will is not necessarily the same; for there are those whose wills are broken, but who are

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not submissive to the Divine will.

To be repentant is to be thoroughly submissive to the Divine will, and implies a change of mental attitude toward sin. This humble, discouraged condition becomes a very favorable one if the person will seek Divine assistance, if he will become submissive to the Lord and ready to do the Divine will. Such will surely receive the blessing of God; for the Lord is very nigh to every one who is broken-hearted. The way to full consecration would be very short to him.

If such as be of contrite heart will be submissive to the Lord, He will save them from their difficulties and bring them into a large place, as the Prophet David states. (Psalm 18:19.) This does not necessarily mean that He will deliver them from financial troubles, but that He will give them peace and rest, which are better than money. If they have family troubles, they will find in Him a superior Friend, who is able and willing to administer superior consolation and refreshment.

Come, ye disconsolate! where'er ye languish,
Come to the mercy-seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts; here tell your anguish;
Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.

Joy of the desolate, light of the straying,
Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure!
Here speaks the Comforter, tenderly saying,
Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot cure.

THE LORD'S METHOD OF DELIVERANCE

The Scriptures assure us that, "There is none righteous, no, not one." There is relative righteousness, however, which God can approve. Those who are seeking to be in harmony with Him to the best of their ability, who are walking in the ways of righteousness, and at the same time are trusting in the precious blood of our Redeemer--such are spoken of as righteous. Of these it is said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."--Matthew 5:6.

This class, however, shall have afflictions. The Scriptures tell us that all who will live godly lives shall suffer. (Acts 14:22; 2 Timothy 3:12; Romans 5:3-5.) The reason

why this is true is that the world is traveling in the opposite direction to righteousness--in the way of selfishness and gratification of the flesh. We read, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15.) This is especially true of this Gospel Age, when some are following in the footsteps of the Master. It was also true of the Jewish Age, when some were seeking to walk in the way of righteousness. The Lord delivered them out of their afflictions, not in the sense of shielding them from trials, but in that of not permitting them to be overcome by their difficulties.

The Ancient Worthies fully appreciated the Divine favor exercised in their behalf, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, in order that they might have the continuance of that favor and larger blessings by and

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by. God delivered them out of their trials and difficulties by not permitting these to overcome them. This was also true of our Lord, and is true of the Church as well. The Lord delivers us out of our trials and difficulties, so that mentally we are not oppressed by them in the same way as are others. He will sustain and support us in our experiences and will eventually deliver us by giving us a share in the First Resurrection.

The sons of God by adoption are, during this Gospel Age, especially beset by trials and difficulties. If they should fall, however, the fact that they have stumbled will not make them feel like going back into sin, if their hearts are of the right stamp. On the contrary, they will feel like St. Peter, who, when others were stumbling, said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." (John 6:68.) The true people of God have no desire to go to any one but Him. If they stumble, they recover themselves, avail themselves of His arrangements for forgiveness and press on. By these stumblings they learn of their own weaknesses, and then fortify themselves so that they may be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.--Ephesians 6:10.

A just man will not fall into sin. The very most that could happen to him would be to stumble. There are various causes for stumbling. But if the heart is right, the man will rise again; for the Lord will show him that he has made a mistake and will point out the way to him by which he may recover himself. If he is a lover of righteousness, he will desire to press on toward that which is right, just, approved of the Lord, even if he should stumble many times.--Psalm 37:23,24; Prov. 24:16.

THE EVIDENCE OF FAVOR WITH GOD

So far as our humanity is concerned, we are undone by reason of the fall. It behooves us, then, to be very humble, to feel our own littleness, our own fallen condition. It becomes us to be very contrite, very much in

opposition to sin, to feel that sin is the great blight upon the whole race, and that God will not be in harmony with anything except that which is righteous and holy.

All, therefore, who would be in harmony with God must be repentant in respect to their own shortcomings and must be appreciative of His lofty standards--His holy standards. He, in turn, informs these that they have His sympathy, and that they shall have His succor. He appreciates the attitude of mind in which they are; and therefore, as our text tells us, He is ready to revive the spirit of the humble and contrite ones. To such He will show His salvation; to others He will not.

Only the humble-minded can really appreciate their own condition. God not only will revive their spirit, but is willing to lift them up and to make them again sons of God, with all that this implies of blessing. He has this attitude toward the humble and contrite in the present time, and He has always had this spirit toward the humble and contrite ones. Throughout Christ's reign this humble class will have His favor and blessing. Only the humble and contrite ones have the opportunity of becoming joint-heirs with our Lord.

God resists the proud. To the humble He gives grace, and opens the eyes of their understanding. They become His children because they are in the attitude to receive His blessings and to be guided by His instruction. The text applies not only in the present time, but will have an application in the next Age. "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." (Isaiah 62:10.) These words are all intended to indicate the preparations for the incoming Age. There is no provision for the proud, none for the haughty, none for the self-conscious--but all for the humble-minded.

If God has these blessings in store for the humble only, and if the humble are few in number at the present time, what of the others of humanity? God is allowing now a humiliating influence to work with people, which should teach them humility and lead them to be contrite of heart. But much more will this be the case in the next Age. "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9.) All the blessings will be upon the contrite and humble. And this will be so markedly before the attention of the people that all will know a change has taken place.

Now the humble and contrite are trodden down in the street. Now the proud are happy. "Now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, even they that tempt God are delivered." (Malachi 3:15.) But in the new Kingdom every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and the humble shall be exalted. (Luke 14:11.) God has provided a thousand years for the education of all. A thousand years may seem a short period for this work when we know that for six thousand years things have been going wrong. But we must recollect

that during the six thousand years, many of the people have lived but a short time--many dying in infancy.

In the new order of things this will be changed, and each will live longer. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." (Isaiah 65:20.) "Judgment [justice] also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place."--Isaiah 28:17.

And then it will not be necessary for one to say to another, "Know the Lord; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 31:34.) The high standard that God has for His people will be recognized. Then all who have humility and the right condition of heart will come into harmony with God. All who refuse to come into harmony with God will get the wages of sin--the Second Death.

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THE TIME, MY SOUL, IS SHORT!

No time to linger by the way,
No time for ease, no time for play;
No time for earthly loves or joys,
No time for worldly cares or toys--
The time, my soul, is short!

No time to murmur or complain,
No time to heed the heart's dull pain;
No time for tears or mournful song,
No time to ask, How far? How long?--
The time, my soul, is short!

Ah, yes! 'tis short--yet time enough
To run thy course, so steep and rough;
Just time to reap "the fields," so white,
Before the coming of "the night"--
Just time, my soul, just time!

Just time to make thy heart more pure,
Just time to make thy "calling sure,"
Just time to enter through "the door,"
To reign with Christ for evermore--
Just time, my soul, just time!

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

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PRIVILEGES OF THE SONS OF GOD

"Your Father knoweth what things
ye have need of."--Matthew 6:8.

THESE words were not addressed to the world in general; for the whole world is lying in sin, altogether out of relationship with God. These words were not addressed even to the ordinary Jew; for the Jews are also members of the Adamic race, which is out of harmony with God, and their Covenant was not one of sonship, but of servants. Moses was faithful as a servant over all his house. (Hebrews 3:5.) We never find Israelites referred to as sons of God. In the prophecies there are references made as to what God would do for them in the future. But there is no direct statement that He was their Father, or that they were His children.

We all see that this was so. It would have been improper that this should be otherwise, for the Sin-Atonement has not yet been made for the world. Neither a Jew nor one of the world today has a right to call God his Father, nor to think of Him as his Father. The only ones who have a right to call God "our Father," are those who have come into covenant relationship with Him through Christ. Through this relationship, the Apostle John says, "Now are we the sons of God."

We are not yet in the Kingdom, to be sons of God without imperfection; but in the future, in the moment of our "change," we shall be "sons of God without rebuke," and be like our Master and share His glory. But in the present time we are sons of God, and have this blessed privilege, this honor, of calling God our Father, because we have received His Holy Spirit. We have this treasure of the Holy Spirit in earthen vessels, and walk by faith, not by sight. All those who have come into the Body of Christ by full consecration are sons of God by faith, and are permitted to call themselves such, to realize Him as their Father, and to think of the testimony of the Scriptures as fully and completely referring to themselves.

SONS OF GOD BY FAITH

But the question is, Why did the Lord use these words to the early disciples before He appeared in the presence of God on their behalf and made an imputation of His merit for them? Were they not really under the Law Covenant still? We answer, Yes. They were still under the Law Covenant. Only by faith were they permitted to call God their Father. They had accepted Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, had accepted Jesus as the Sent of God, the One who would ultimately accomplish all that He had come to do. They were to manifest their faith by calling God their Father, calling themselves the sons of God--although we find that they did not really speak of themselves as the sons of God.

It was some time after our Lord's death that their faith began to grasp this privilege. The Jews would have been afraid to call themselves sons of God, or to call Him their Father. If they had spoken of themselves as sons of God, they would have thought that they were doing something reprehensible. When Jesus spoke of Himself as the Son of God, they said that He was a blasphemer.-- John 5:18; Luke 22:70,71.

We find from the context that the Lord is advising us that we should not think of our petitions to the Heavenly Father as being for His information. Our Lord said, practically, "You have not an ignorant Father. The heathen go through great supplications, as though their God was asleep, or indifferent, when they petition him. But you, as My disciples, know of God as your Heavenly Father; and as a good earthly father loves his child and makes provision for it, so your Heavenly Father knoweth the things you have need of before you ask Him. It is not necessary for you to give Him advice; for He knows your needs better than you do, and is aware that some of the things for which you ask would be injurious."

THE DIVINE OBJECT IN ANSWERING PRAYER

Why then do we ask at all, since He is our Father, and, as a loving Father, makes all the provisions necessary and needful? We answer that our instruction to pray is intended to awake a further realization of the fact that all of our blessings come from the Heavenly Father; otherwise we should fail to get a great spiritual blessing from contemplating His love and care. He would not have us get the blessing in the same way that trees take in moisture. He would have us to be intelligent, to consider that He is our Father. He knows our needs and has made provision for them. He wishes us to exercise faith in respect to His care and to all the things promised.

The Divine object, then, in answering prayer is that we may have a stimulation of faith in connection with our receiving daily blessings--both temporal and spiritual. The Lord knows the things that the world has need of, and He is making a general provision for the world. He has already arranged a way by which the world ultimately will return as sons on the human plane, and He is making all things to work together for good to them in a general and broad way. God has a great Plan of redemption through Jesus, and a great Plan of exalting the Church to be with her Lord in the Heavenly Kingdom. Then that Kingdom shall pour blessings upon the earth for the rolling away of the curse, and for the Restitution of mankind to the original perfection of Adam in Eden.

To whatever extent any one has an ear to hear, it is proper to tell him about these good things. But only those who have the ear to hear are to be specially instructed at this present time. The knowledge of God's grace at this time has been especially for the called-out ones. The remainder of mankind has been allowed to

remain in ignorance. It is quite proper that, as they begin to be awakened, they should hear a little and understand a little; but we are certain that the world cannot see the deep things of God. As the Apostle tells us, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Again he tells us that "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."--I Corinthians 2:14,10.

WHO MAY PRAY

The Lord is not dealing with the world; for they are not in covenant relationship with Him and, therefore, they cannot please Him now. His last dealing with the world was when they were condemned in Adam. They had no right to life. They were sinners and must die. He has not yet completed the arrangement for the healing of the breach. He has been getting ready for that New Covenant arrangement for the restoration of the world.

The only ones who are now in relationship with Him are the members of the Body of Christ. "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." If we go out of relationship to Christ, then we have no right to pray. But if we maintain this relationship, if His Word abides in us, if we are conforming our lives to His will, and if we are in harmony with His will and the Spirit of His Word, we may ask what we will, and it shall be done.

Those who are abiding fully in Christ would not want anything except God's will to be done. And if they have

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His Word abiding in them richly, they will know what things they may properly ask for. But if they are ignorant of God's will in the matter, then they would surely say, "Not my will, but Thine be done!" So whatever would be the petition, they would get it, because they desire God's will to be done.

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TRAINING FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE KINGDOM

"Consider the lilies of the field,
how they grow."--Matthew 6:28.

IN THE Sermon on the Mount, the Master is teaching His disciples certain important lessons. He is not teaching the world, but those who had come to Him, especially desiring to be taught, desiring to be His disciples. He points out to them that if they would be

His disciples, thenceforth their main object in life would be to seek to become members of the Kingdom of God. He Himself is to be the great King; and an elect, choice number from the world are to be associated with Him in that Kingdom. When this election is completed, that Kingdom will be established. Then the blessing of all the world will follow under that Kingdom, in harmony with the promise made to Abraham, "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

These, then, who aspire to be members of the Kingdom class should make this the chief aim and object of life: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"; that is to say, the righteousness necessary to attain a place in that Kingdom. And all things necessary are promised to be supplied to such aspirants and seekers. Our Lord did not promise rich clothing, fine houses, ease or luxury; nor could we suppose that these would be specially helpful.

Certain training is necessary for membership in the Kingdom. God, the great Husbandman in one picture, the great Overseer in another, would supervise the affairs of each member; and all things would be made to work together for their good. If they needed experience in trials, difficulties and privations, He would see to it that they got those experiences. If they were proud, they would get experiences that would humble them. If they

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were rude, they would have experiences that would make them polite. It is necessary for them to have these experiences; for if they did not learn at all, they would never get the inheritance to which they have become heirs.

LESSONS IN EVERY EXPERIENCE OF LIFE

The Master took note of the fact that the majority of people are full of the cares of this present life--what they shall eat, what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed. He saw that many of the poor were distressed, not knowing, perhaps, whence the next meal would come. If such were the Lord's people, they should exercise faith. If the Father permitted His children to be in these difficulties, He saw that there was some good lesson for them to learn. They were to seek to learn that lesson, and not to fret about their condition.

This did not mean that His followers were to be negligent, to care nothing about their appearance or about what they should eat. This is not the way to do; but while appreciating the beauties of nature, of dress, etc., they were to have faith in their Heavenly Father and to realize that the luxuries of life might not be the best for them. But they were to be content--knowing that all things would work out good to those who were rightly exercised.

This matter of taking anxious thought for food and clothing is not confined to the poor. Some of the middle

class, as they rise to wealth, find themselves engrossed with the cares of this life, eating, drinking and dressing--saying to themselves, What shall I wear this time, or that time, etc.? Eating and drinking and dressing seem to be the engrossing thoughts of both rich and poor.

The Lord's people are to be content with such things as they have. They are to seek to provide things honest and decent. But honest and decent things are not extravagant things. The Lord's people are not to be inclined to use money in self-gratification. As they look about and see others of the Lord's children, they see that they must not take too many of these blessings for themselves, but that they should use their money with economy. They should use their money as a part of their stewardship, and know that they are to give an account of it.

We are to seek first of all the interests of the Kingdom. If the interests of the Kingdom need money, we would feel guilty if we should use the Lord's consecrated money in self-gratification. Presumably this is the reason that the Lord has left the interests of the Kingdom in a condition of semi-poverty--in order that His people may forward the interests of that Kingdom. Our God is very rich. All the gold and silver are His, and the cattle on a thousand hills; and if it was for the interests of the Kingdom class, He would forward them money in abundance. Things are left as they are, then, that we may practise economy, may have an opportunity of denying ourselves present blessings for the interests of the Kingdom.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE LILIES

In this connection, our text comes in, illustrating the thought by the lily of the field. Indigenous to the soil, it has those things provided which are necessary for its development. The Lord did not choose a hot-house plant, dependent upon the horticulturist, but He chose a flower from the field. That flower grows under those conditions because the great Protector has arranged for its interest.

This does not mean for the plant to be idle; for if it were idle, it would die. The bulb is continually sending up nourishment to its stalks. It is not idle by any means. But does the plant do this by worrying? No. It merely uses the opportunities that come to it. It merely exercises its functions by the laws of its nature.

God makes provision for the lily in its native soil; and as it grows in its beauty, "even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." So is it to be with God's children. When the Father begets us as His children and we are placed under present conditions, we may be sure that He who so placed us made the necessary arrangements for us; that He is not unwise; that He has not put us in conditions that are unfavorable for us. They are all of Divine arrangement.

If we move ourselves out of these conditions, we may be responsible in some degree, but as long as we exercise no will of our own to take ourselves out of His providential

care, we may be sure that all things will be overruled to work for good to us. If we then seek to adorn ourselves with all the graces of the Holy Spirit, and if we use the opportunities that are in our immediate grasp, we shall be using the means for our own development.

The lily has a right to use everything within its power for its own nourishment. So it is our right and our duty to use the means within our power for beautifying our characters and for our spiritual nourishment, knowing

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that He who began the good work in us is able to complete it unto the Day of Jesus Christ.

DEVOUT CONTEMPLATION OF THE DIVINE CHARACTER HELPFUL

Our Lord calls attention to how such simple things in nature should be studied, be considered. The lessons to be learned in connection with all the affairs of life will be helpful to such as approach the study from the right standpoint of faith in the Creator, and a realization that He is necessarily the embodiment and representative of the very highest and very noblest qualities of which the human mind could conceive--perfect in Justice, perfect in Wisdom, perfect in Power, perfect in Love.

The heart that thus considers, makes progress, grows in grace, in knowledge, in love. The heart that fails to consider the little things, is hindered from a proper consideration of God and from a proper appreciation of His Plan, and thus from a proper appreciation of His Character.

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THE NEW CREATURE'S STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

"I keep my body under and bring it into subjection,... lest I myself should be a castaway."--1 Corinthians 9:27.

THERE is a duality in Christians that is not to be recognized in others. The natural man has no distinct entity aside from his body. The New Creature is recognized as having a life and entity distinct from the body; and this New Creature is temporarily being developed and nourished in the old body. The old body has its will, its desires. The New Creature has its interests, its desires. Consequently there is a conflict between them.

In the first part of the text--"I keep my body under"--we may see the thought of mastery. The New Creature should say, "I am the master--I will not allow my body

to master me," as though there were fear lest the old creature should get the New Creature down and strangle it. It is a battle to determine which will win, which will live and not be destroyed.

The first thing, then, is for the New Creature to get the body under, and thus have the mastery. The New Creature having gained the mastery should, as a secondary step, bring the old nature into subjection and not do its bidding. The old creature is continually trying to assert itself. Very frequently it argues as to how it should be treated and how it should not be treated. Sometimes through false sympathy it might be treated too well.

We must remember that the life of the old creature means the death of the New Creature. We must vanquish the flesh; and we shall not be the victor until the flesh is entirely destroyed. Our victories as New Creatures will not be gained until we as old creatures die. So the battle is unto the death, and there should be no particular sympathy between the two natures.

That which would enliven, encourage, the flesh in any way is a foe, and must be banished from our hearts. This might lead in some cases to extremes of conduct, and we might be judged as extremists by the world. But the world is not our judge. The world has no "exceeding great and precious promises" before them. They are a different class from us altogether. We are not to take our instructions from them, nor to allow them to shape our view of the matter, but we are to use the spirit of a sound mind in all things.

DEATH OF THE FLESH ESSENTIAL

The Apostle says that we are to be dead with Christ, to suffer with Him. The Master invites us to take up our cross and follow Him. This means the complete subjection of the flesh--the death of the flesh. If we fail to gain the victory over the flesh, we shall fail to gain the great prize. The ones who are to gain the prize of the High Calling are those who will crucify the flesh, who will put it to death. We are to be "more than conquerors."

This is what the Apostle means: But I keep my body under and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. All the preaching to others will not get me into the Kingdom. I must keep my body under and bring it into subjection, using all diligence. Whatever I would get out of it, my pampering it in any way would be to my

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disadvantage. I am to be on the lookout to accomplish the victory, lest I should be a castaway.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE NEW WILL CONDITIONAL

Elsewhere the Apostle has told us that the Church is

a New Creation of God; and that to those begotten again of the Holy Spirit old things pass away and all things become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17.) Addressing the same class, he says, "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds." We have put off the old man, the natural, fallen man, with his privileges as the successor of Adam, in the same sense that we put off the old will and have received a new mind, in Christ. Instead, therefore, of belonging to the human family, we have stepped into membership in the Body of Christ--out of the old into the new.

The Body of Christ is not human, but spiritual. We have made this transfer from one family, with its hopes and interests, into the other. The old man is in a fallen and dilapidated condition in every way; and we realize that its deeds were far from satisfactory to ourselves, and especially unsatisfactory in God's sight. We, therefore, by our wills, stepped out of this condition, under guidance from on High. We have made a full consecration of all the old rights and interests, which we had in the old nature, in order that we may be in the New Man, Christ.

As we have come into membership in the New Man, Christ, of which Jesus is the Head, we have under this Head an increase of knowledge. "We are renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created us." The New Creature comes to a more and more clear knowledge of the new will in proportion as he seeks to put down the human will and to be directed by the Holy Spirit.

It would seem, therefore, that we put off the old man, Adam, and the human nature in general, in order that we may put on Christ and be found in Him, as members of His Body, and may receive with Him a share in the exceeding glory, and ultimately be accounted worthy of a place in the Kingdom of God. In proportion as we grow in grace, in knowledge, our appreciation of the Heavenly things increases. Thus our renewing progresses.

The new will recognized by God in the begetting of the Holy Spirit is the New Creature which thus puts off the old and puts on the new. Its existence depends on this transformation. Failure means Second Death. Barely to overcome would mean a lower place on the spirit plane--in the "Great Company." Only the "more than conquerors" will get joint-heirship with their Lord--with exceeding glory and the divine nature.

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CROSS-BEARING A PRIVILEGE

"And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, ...and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus."--Luke 23:26.

THIS TEXT brings before our minds the whole scene of our Master's shame, ignominy--His

condemnation by the Roman Governor at the solicitation of the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees--men of His own nation.

Those who led Him away were the centurion and soldiers appointed by Pilate--not willingly, but by reason of the stress laid on him by the Jewish nation. The chief priests had threatened to report him as unfaithful to the interests of the Roman Empire, if he did not condemn Jesus. And then how would the Emperor treat him who allowed this humble Nazarene to make the claim of being king in territory under Roman jurisdiction?

We remember that the Jewish Sanhedrin tried the Lord under a different charge altogether. Their charge against Him was blasphemy, the penalty of which, under the Law, would have been stoning to death. Possibly they were not allowed to do stoning at that time; or possibly they feared the people.

It was not Divinely intended that our Lord should be stoned, but that He should be treated as a cursed one--hanged upon a tree. (Deuteronomy 21:22,23.) "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." (John 3:14,15.) So through fear of the multitude or from lack of authority from the Roman Governor, the Jews failed to stone Jesus.

Since they could not bring the charge of blasphemy before a Roman Court, they were obliged to bring a different charge--that, while they were loyal to the Roman Emperor, Jesus was disloyal to the Roman interests. Pilate washed his hands of the affair. He wished to be free from any guilt. But under stress of the Jews, and willing to keep peace, he caused the charge to be made that our Lord was crucified because of claiming to be King of the Jews.

The narrative seems to imply that Jesus bore His own cross on the way to Calvary, and that He fell beneath its weight. There might have been various reasons for this. He was weak from undergoing very rigorous physical and mental strain. He had suffered from the bloody sweat in the Garden of Gethsemane, and had endured different trials--before the Sanhedrin, before Pilate, and before Herod. After this He was flogged! We can imagine that a person who had undergone so much would be scarcely able to walk, let alone carry a burden.

THE PROBABLE WEIGHT OF THE CROSS

When we think of our Lord as a perfect man, we would not think of Him as being the strongest of men. The imperfections of our race have manifested themselves in various ways. We have no reason to suppose that the first specimen of our race, Adam, was of surpassing strength, which might denote coarseness. We see this principle illustrated in fruits and vegetables. When we find an overgrown apple, we learn that it is not so tender as one of average size. So with a man of great physical stature--a giant. He might be coarse. We are to think of

our Lord, not as extremely rugged, nor as weak, but as of great delicacy, and of reasonable strength and fiber.

When we think of the cross, too, we believe that it was of no light weight. We know of no light woods in the vicinity of Jerusalem. The most common tree there is the olive, which is an extremely heavy wood and of remarkable density. If we should suppose the cross to have been three feet in the ground and of reasonable height, it must have been at least twelve to fourteen feet long, and the cross-beam must have been at least five feet. Allowing a reasonable thickness for strength and for keeping it from bending under its load, we would think that the cross must have weighed from one hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds. This gives us the thought that it was no light weight.

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LESSONS FROM THE INCIDENT

We have every reason to sympathize greatly with the tradition that the Lord fell under the weight of the cross. It was at this juncture that Simon, evidently a strong and rugged countryman who was passing by, was stopped by the centurion and his band, and compelled to assist Jesus in carrying the cross. Apparently, even then, its weight was on Jesus.

There are lessons for us in this incident. One is that the disciples of Jesus, the faithful eleven, missed an opportunity of cross-bearing. At first we might be inclined to censure them severely. We must reflect, however, that they feared for their lives. We may sympathize with them, and at the same time learn a lesson of greater courage in everything connected with the Master.

It is true that the multitude might have been as anxious to cry for the death of the disciples as for the Lord's. But one of them had said that he was ready to die for the Lord, and so said they all. How strange that in the moment of testing they did not display the courage! It is much easier to attest great loyalty, great faithfulness, than it is to manifest these traits when the test comes. With the opportune moment, come the difficulties, and the fearful sights and sounds, carrying terror with them.

We, of course, have no opportunity of doing anything of this kind for the Master Himself. But we realize that He is still with us in the brethren. What a precious privilege this affords us of still helping to bear the Master's cross! How advantageous to know that He still recognizes that whatsoever is done unto the least of these His brethren is done unto Him!

CROSS-BEARING PRECEDES CROWNING

Another thought that we have in this connection is that Simon, under the necessity of cross-bearing, would receive the burden either willingly or unwillingly. We

have no record of what his experiences were. There is a tradition which declares that he afterwards became one of the Master's disciples. So in the Lord's providence, sometimes there is responsibility laid upon us. And if the Lord lays a cross upon us, will it be borne with gladness or with murmuring? If the former, we shall have a blessing, even though we had not sought the cross, even if it had been forced upon us.

When trials and difficulties come, and crosses are forced upon us, happy are we if we appreciate the opportunity of cross-bearing, recognizing that this is closely connected with the crowning. Simon represented in this case all of the Lord's faithful ones who help to bear the cross, following His example, walking in His steps. The cross will not be too heavy for us. The Lord will bear the heavy end of it; and our experiences will be only such as will be for our good and will work out for our blessing.

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"I know not the way that's before me,
The joys or the griefs it may bring;
What clouds are o'erhanging the future,
What flowers by the wayside may spring.
But there's One who will journey beside me,
Nor in weal nor in woe will forsake;
And this is my solace and comfort,
'He knoweth the way that I take.'"

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CROSS-BEARING THE WAY OF GROWTH

"Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple."--Luke 14:27.

A DISCIPLE is a pupil, one who follows a teacher or leader. The Lord has promised His disciples certain great blessings. If they are obedient, they shall be greatly blessed with everlasting life, shall sit with Him in His Throne, and be with Him where He is.

It becomes, therefore, an important question as to what is involved in discipleship. Is it an easy or a difficult matter? How can we enter the School of Christ? The Lord here and elsewhere tells us the terms. In another text He says, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me." "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." --Matthew 16:24; Luke 14:27.

There is, therefore, evidently a process in the matter. First of all, one must see what discipleship is and what the cross is. Some may perceive more or less distinctly than others. To some it might be a very severe ordeal to take up the cross. Some people judge the weight of a thing through perception; others through experience.

Our Lord said that it would be better not to take up the cross unless we have the determination to go on unto the end. He illustrates this in saying, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."--Luke 9:62.

The Lord very distinctly told what the cross would imply to those who become His disciples. He said that whosoever would be His disciple would suffer persecution. He warned us that carrying the cross would be a serious matter. If, therefore, you determine that you would like to be His disciple, sit down and count the cost. If you take up the cross, it is to be not merely lifted, but carried faithfully unto death.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CROSS-BEARING?

The taking up of the cross, then, is done after we come to a knowledge of the Truth. The world are not bearing the cross at all; neither are those who are having their own wills crossed continually. Many a man will say, "Since I married, I have my cross with my wife"; and many a wife will say that she has her cross with her husband. But neither of these is the cross of Christ--the difficulty is that there was misjudgment in the marriage. The couples are mismatched.

Nevertheless such a thing might become cross-bearing. If, for instance, the opposition of husband or wife were engendered by faithfulness to the Lord, the bearing of this would be cross-bearing, because of being endured for Christ's sake, for the Truth's sake. Endurance of opposition by business competitors because of our faithfulness to Christ would be part of the cross-bearing. Probably it is good for us that we do not see all the time what the cross means.

"We know not what awaits us,
God kindly veils our eyes,
And o'er each step of our onward way
He makes new scenes to rise."

We cannot take up the cross until we have seen what the cross is, and have engaged to take up that cross and become Christ's disciple. After we have taken up that cross, it has to be borne, our Lord tells us. Bearing it does not mean our running away from it, or getting alarmed at it. Bearing the cross means enduring it. We are to follow our instructions along this line.

Our Lord says, "When they persecute you in one city, flee to another." Whosoever is faithful will suffer persecution. Therefore, to be without opposition is proof, not that we are being favored of God, but that He is not dealing with us as sons. Only those whom He deals with

as sons will become of the Royal Priesthood and participate in His glorious Kingdom. Whoever thinks to run away from the difficulties that come, makes a mistake.

THE PURPOSE ACCOMPLISHED BY TRIALS

What, then, would be the basis on which we could relieve ourselves from trials? We should not seek to release ourselves unless we realize that by endurance we are accomplishing no service for the Truth. Then we might seek to see whether the Lord would open some other door. If, for instance, one finds himself where he is simply suffering and doing no good, let him look about and ask the Lord in prayer to show him what to do. Perhaps the Lord may open a way of escape. We shall not get rid of our trials and imperfections, however, until we get rid of the mortal flesh; for the course of the world is out of line with righteousness. The whole world is out of the way through ignorance, superstition, blindness; and amidst them we are to strive to show forth the praises of Him who called us from darkness into marvelous light.

So, then, the following after the Lord is apparently the thing that is especially emphasized in our text. The bearing of the cross is the way of growth in character for the consecrated child of God. If no trials or difficulties come to us, if our appetites or desires are never interfered with in our service to the Lord and the Truth, we may be sure that we are making some mistake. We have not become His disciples.

But if we should have these trials, the Apostle says that we are to consider them only as light afflictions and but for a moment; and that these are working out "for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." We are looking at the present time, not for the things that are seen--the earthly applause and glory--but for the Heavenly Glory--for the things that the Lord has promised to those that love Him.--2 Corinthians 4:17,18.

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"WHAT SHALL I RENDER UNTO THE LORD?"

(Psalm 116:12-14)

What shall I render, Lord, to Thee
For all Thy benefits toward me?
For life and every earthly good,
For raiment, shelter, daily food;
For light and Truth, for peace and love,
For heavenly wisdom from above?--
How great Thy bounties unto me!
What have I that is not from Thee?

For all these benefits toward me,

What shall I render, Lord, to Thee?
The Cup Thy hand of Love hath poured,
I'll humbly take, most gracious Lord,
And call upon Thy holy name
To help me Thy great Plan proclaim;
I'll spend my days in ceaseless praise,
And tell abroad Thy wondrous ways!

"Salvation's Cup"--of suffering, too--
Of suffering with God's chosen few,
Dear Lord, I'll drink of this, Thy Cup,
And smiling through my tears, look up--
A mingled Cup of grief and joy,
Of blessedness without alloy,
Of Love and fellowship Divine,
A foretaste of the Kingdom-wine!

That all, dear Lord, may know and see
Thy countless benefits toward me,
Before Thy congregation, now,
I'll pay my consecration Vow;
And in Thy strength, supplied each day,
I'll strive to walk the narrow way
That leads to rest and God and Thee,
And blissful immortality! GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

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RE CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

"Christ...being put to death indeed in flesh,
but made alive in spirit."--1 Peter 3:18. Rotherham.

For forty days after His resurrection our Lord was with His disciples before His ascension. Yet He revealed Himself to them, according to the Records, not more than eleven times in all--and some of these instances are probably duplications. His interviews with the disciples lasted only a few minutes each, except on the walk to Emmaus. These manifestations were attended by circumstances and conditions which spoke in thunder tones of a great change which had occurred to Him. Evidently He was no longer the same being, although He had the same loving interest in them as before. He was still their Lord and Master, the same Jesus, though no longer Jesus in the flesh. He was now "the Lord, that Spirit," "a quickening Spirit."

There is no Scriptural statement to the effect that Jesus arose in the flesh. We have noted the Scriptures very carefully, and find none of them to say that Jesus arose in the flesh. On the contrary, we find, as the Apostle declares, "Now the Lord is that Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:17.) St. Paul in telling us how he saw the Lord Jesus, says that he saw the Lord, not in the flesh,

but shining "above the brightness of the sun" "at noonday."
--Acts 26:13-15.

The Apostle tells us that the Church is to be a spirit body: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (I Corinthians 15:42-44.) He tells us that our experiences in the resurrection must be similar to those of our Lord. In our Lord's case there was a sowing in dishonor and raising in glory; a sowing an animal body and a raising a spirit body. St. Peter calls attention to this fact when he says, "Christ...being put to death indeed in flesh, but made alive in spirit."--I Peter 3:18. Rotherham.

The question, then, arises, How could the Lord be raised a spirit body? We can merely give you the Word of the Lord for it. He was raised so. The new nature began when our Lord was begotten of the Holy Spirit at the time of His baptism, and was completed when he was perfected as a spirit being at His Resurrection.

The various Scriptures which are cited about Jesus' appearance in bodies of flesh do not prove that Jesus had a body of flesh; for angels have appeared among mankind in fleshly bodies. And when Jesus rose from the dead, He appeared, or materialized, in the same way that He had appeared to Abraham in olden times. (Genesis 18:1,2; 15:4,5.) One of His manifestations after His resurrection was when He took a walk with two of His disciples to Emmaus and sat down with them to supper. When He broke bread, He became known to them and vanished out of their sight!--Luke 24:30,31.

A MATERIALIZED BODY

In the case when He appeared to His disciples, it is stated that He came into the room where they were, "when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews." We read further along, that eight days later He again appeared in the same room, in the same manner, "the doors being shut." (John 20:19,26.) These things were evidently to show the disciples that He was no longer a flesh being, but a spirit being. During the forty days after His resurrection He appeared, probably, not more than three hours in all. He remained with them to establish their faith, so that they might be able to receive the Holy Spirit at the proper time.

In answer to a question about Philip's vanishing from the sight of the eunuch, and being found at Azotus, we reply that God was able to take him away. But there was nothing said about his being made a spirit being. Philip will, no doubt, in due time share with the Lord the change of nature in the First Resurrection--"in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; for "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."--I Corinthians 15:52,50.

When Jesus appeared in Jerusalem in the midst of His disciples and they were affrighted, He said, "Behold My

hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." (Luke 24:39.) He was there impressing upon them that they were not SEEING a spirit being, a spirit body. They saw a materialized body. The Lord was a Spirit all the time, however, and the flesh and bones were merely agents of appearance. So our Lord appeared in flesh and bones, and He also appeared in clothing.

BODY AND CLOTHING CREATED FOR THE OCCASION

Where did the flesh and bones come from? The same place that the clothing came from. The human body of flesh and bones, etc., and its clothing, which appeared suddenly while the doors were shut, did not go out of the door, but simply disappeared, or dissolved, into the same elements from which He had created them a few moments before. "He vanished [Greek, ginomai aphantos, became non-manifest, i.e., invisible. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance.] out of their sight" (Luke 24:31), and was no longer seen of them when the flesh and bones and clothing in which He had manifested Himself were dissolved, though doubtless He was still with them--invisibly present; so also much of the time during those forty days.

The power manifested by our Lord, to create and dissolve the clothing in which He appeared, was just as superhuman as the creating and dissolving of His assumed human body; and the body was no more His glorious spirit body than were the clothes He wore. It will be remembered that the seamless robe and other clothing which our Redeemer wore before His crucifixion had been divided among the Roman soldiers, and that the grave clothes were left folded away in the sepulcher (John 19:23,24,40; 20:5-7), so that the clothing in which He appeared on the different occasions mentioned must have been specially created.

Our thought is that our Lord was perfect in the flesh when He was a man, and that He gave Himself an Offering, as a Ransom-price for Adam. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor." "A body hast Thou prepared Me." (Hebrews 2:9; 10:5.) That earthly, human body of flesh suffered death; and God would not

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again make Him flesh, but He raised our Lord from the dead a New Creature of the Divine nature. After His resurrection our Lord said to His Apostles, "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth."--Matthew 28:18.

All this indicates to us the great change that came to our Lord at the time of His resurrection. If He is now merely a man, He is still "lower than the angels." And to think of our Lord as a man and lower than the angels is contrary to the Lord's Word that He is exalted far above angels to the Divine nature. "And being found in fashion

as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."--Philippians 2:8-11.

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THE GIFTS OF WHITSUNTIDE

--MAY 11.--I CORINTHIANS 12:1-11.--

"There are diversities of gifts,
but the same Spirit."--Verse 4.

WHITSUNTIDE, or Pentecost, marks a very special period in God's great Program respecting mankind. It stands next in importance to the great events connected with our Lord Jesus; viz., His baptism at Jordan and the anointing of the Holy Spirit there, His finishing of His vow of consecration at Calvary, His resurrection from the dead on the third day--His glorious spirit-birth, as partaker of the Divine nature.

All that Jesus did necessarily preceded the acceptance of any members of the human family to joint-heirship with Him, or to any recognition of God as His children. God acknowledged Adam as His son on the human plane, "a little lower than the angels," so long as he remained obedient and loyal; but when he disobeyed and came under the Divine sentence of death, he broke the covenant between God and himself. (Hosea 6:7, margin.) From that time onward, God had no sons amongst men until Jesus' time, because all were imperfect, sharing in Father Adam's imperfection by laws of heredity.

Then God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, with a life uncontaminated, a life that was not derived from Father Adam and was therefore not involved in his sentence. This One, "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners," God recognized as His Son. When He made consecration of His life at Jordan and symbolized it in His water baptism, God accepted the sacrifice and bestowed upon Him the Holy Spirit in begetting power.

Thenceforth He was the Son of God in two senses--first, according to the flesh; and second, according to the Spirit. But in God's order the spirit-begotten One was to triumph by fully offering up the fleshly one. This work of Jesus was accomplished at Calvary, where He laid down His life on behalf of the sins of the whole world.

But still God could not recognize the world. They were all sinners, and continued so to be until Jesus ascended on High, appeared in the Father's presence, and made satisfaction for sins. Be it noted, however, that He did not make satisfaction for all sins then, but merely for the sins of the Church--for the sins of those who would be called of the Father, and who would accept the call and walk in the footsteps of Jesus. As for the world, their sins are still on them.

The only way to obtain forgiveness of sins during this Age, therefore, is to become a disciple of Jesus. Thus, as the Apostle says, we, Jesus' followers, have escaped the condemnation that is still on the world. The Scriptures show us that God has a different way of dealing with the world, and a different time. He will deal with the world through Christ's Millennial Kingdom, for a thousand years, to scatter their darkness, to forgive their sins and lift them up to human perfection. Meantime, God deals with the Church only; and it is the Church class that the Apostle discusses in today's lesson.

This Church class began its existence at Pentecost--Whitsuntide. Hence, we say that this marks a most important era in the affairs of the Church. It is true that Jesus called His disciples and told them various things during His ministry; but when He left them, He instructed them to tarry and not to begin their work at all until they should be duly authorized by the Father, duly anointed with the Holy Spirit. This anointing which they would receive would be their authority, and would give them the necessary qualification to be the mouthpieces and ambassadors of the Father and of the Son.

The Father could not recognize them sooner than Pentecost; for until Christ's presentation of His merit on their behalf, they were like the remainder of the world--still sinners, still condemned. When the Pentecostal blessing came, it manifested the fact that Jesus had ascended to the Father's presence; and that the Father had graciously received Him, had appreciated His great work of sacrifice, and had accepted it as satisfactory for the sins of the Church--the Household of Faith. It was on the basis of this forgiveness of sins, as well as on the basis of the consecration of the disciples to God and His service, that the spirit-begetting of Pentecost came upon them.

THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

We are to distinguish between the gifts of the Spirit and the fruits of the Spirit. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are developments of the heart and character, which come more or less slowly, according to the personality and the environment of each of the spirit-begotten ones. These fruits of the Spirit, the Apostle tells us, can be seen; they are manifest--"Meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love."

These fruits must be developed in our hearts; and this will mean more or less of a manifestation of them in our words and deeds, as well as in our thoughts. The riper the Christian, the riper these fruits; and if no fruits, then no Christian; for as the Apostle says, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." But this Spirit of Christ, these fruits of the Spirit, may be more or less overshadowed by weaknesses of the flesh; and all may not be able to see to what extent the brother who is weak in the flesh is really fighting a good fight against the spirit of the world, the spirit of the Adversary, and the mind of his own flesh.

God alone knoweth the heart; therefore, we are to judge nothing as respects the degree of faithfulness. We may, however, and should judge as to whether or not we see good fruits or bad fruits in ourselves, or in others who profess to be followers of Jesus. The Master said, "By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Surely not! The thorns and the thistles are bad fruits, belonging to the evil nature, and not fruits of the Spirit, of the Lord, appertaining to the New Creature.

But when Pentecost came, those disciples who had already accepted Jesus were not prepared to manifest immediately rich, ripe fruitage of the Holy Spirit. It requires days, weeks, months, years, for such development. Up to this time they were natural men. Only a few days before Jesus had said to them, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom." He perceived that there was strife amongst themselves as to which should be greatest; and that this was entirely contrary to the proper spirit which they must have if they would finally be accounted worthy of participation in His Kingdom. We see then why the brethren waiting at Pentecost in the upper room could not have a manifestation of the fruits of the Spirit at that time. But it was very necessary to them and to us that they should have some manifestation of God's favor; that there should be some way in which God would show that Jesus had accomplished the Father's work, and that His sacrifice had been acceptable to the Father on our behalf. God manifested this acceptance by the bestowment of certain gifts, which were not fruits of the Spirit, in any sense of the word.

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Those gifts were widely distributed in the early Church, and were miraculous. Some who had received the gift of the Spirit spoke one language and some another, of which they had previously no knowledge; some had the gift of interpreting the foreign languages which the others spoke; some received the gift of healing; and some had power to work other miracles.

These gifts served a three-fold purpose: (1) They proved God's favor, and that it had come through Christ, and therefore proved that He had ascended, and that His

entire work of redemption had been satisfactory to the Father. (2) They were proofs to the public that God was with these people. This would lead lovers of God to investigate the Message they bore. (3) They were an assurance to the disciples themselves that they were following in the right way, and that God was blessing them and leading them.

All these experiences, indispensable for the establishment of the early Church, came at a time when such manifestation was most necessary. The early Church could not walk by faith as we do. They needed the assistance of sight, to the extent that was there granted; for they had no Bibles. They had no instruction from God except such as came through these channels.

St. Paul explains the matter in today's lesson. When they came together, one would speak in an unknown tongue. Another would arise in another part of the audience, and with a power not his own give an interpretation of the foreign language used by the speaker with "tongues." This drew the brethren together every day, especially on the first day of the week. They wanted to have fellowship and instruction; and in this way they obtained it, God guiding in respect to the messages delivered in unknown tongues and to the interpretations.

Thus God taught them in almost the only way they could have received instruction at that time, but very differently from the way in which He now instructs His people, or has ever instructed them since the Apostles' day. Such instruction is no longer necessary, and is therefore no longer given. Instead, we have something much better. We have the Gospels, recording our Lord's words, parables, dark sayings, etc.; we have the Epistles of the New Testament, comments of the inspired Apostles on the Old Testament writings; and we have the prophecies of the Old Testament, to which St. Peter declares, "We do well to take heed, as unto a light which shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn."--2 Peter 1:19.

OURS A BETTER EXPERIENCE

With these Divinely provided helps, the man of God, as St. Paul declares, "may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work." Through these channels the Holy Spirit is instructing the Church. But the gifts of the Spirit were necessary at Pentecost. Instead of those gifts, we now have the fruits of the Spirit, as testifying God's favor, and our own progress in the good way. With our further enlightenment the Lord requires of us more than was required of the early Church--that we walk by faith and not by sight.

St. Paul points out that all these variations in the manifestations of the Spirit meant, not different spirits, but the one Spirit, working in the entire Church, with the one purpose of building them all up as various members in the one Body of Christ. He says, "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God that worketh all in all.

To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge; to another, faith; to another, gifts of healing; to another, miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, diversity of tongues and interpretations."

"YE ARE ALL ONE BODY"

The oneness of the Church with each other and with their Lord, the Head, St. Paul repeatedly sets forth, and particularly in today's lesson. He shows that the different gifts enabled the different members of the Body to co-operate for their mutual welfare, edification and upbuilding, in preparation for the glories of service in the coming Kingdom. He says that as the human body is one, but has many members, all under the control of the head, so also is the Body of Christ. The Church is one Body, but composed of many members, all under the control of the Head, Jesus, operating through the Spirit of Truth, by the Word of Truth and by Divine providences.

The object of the organization of the Church is not the conversion of the world, but it is the upbuilding of herself and preparation for a future service. That future service is to be the blessing of the world. But before that service for the world can be properly begun, the Church herself must be developed, proven, approved of God, and

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glorified by a share in the First Resurrection.

A MORE EXCELLENT WAY

St. Paul, further on in the chapter, tells how the various members of the Body should co-operate with each other, offsetting each other's imperfections, compensating for each other's shortcomings and weaknesses, and seeking only the welfare of the Body as a whole. There should be no schisms, no division, no sectarianism in the Body of Christ, the Church, and all the members should have the same love one for another. Sectarian love and sectarian pride should be unknown. Likewise, if any of the members suffer, all should feel a sympathy. He points out that God set the different members in this Body: first, the Apostles; and secondarily, prophets, or orators; and thirdly, teachers; after that, miracles, gifts, helps, diversities of tongues. All have not the same office given them of the Lord, but each should seek faithfully to use the talents which he possesses; and while using these gifts they should seek the best they are capable of exercising.

Then the Apostle adds, "Yet shew I unto you a more excellent way," still better than any of these gifts. Following along (chapter 13), he declares that one might have these gifts, and yet make shipwreck entirely; and that it was necessary, even with the gifts, to cultivate the fruits of the Spirit. For though we should have the gift

of prophecy, understanding all mysteries and knowledge, and have all faith, but have not love--the great fruit of the Spirit--we would be nothing. Moreover, he declares that the gifts would vanish away, but that the fruits would last eternally.

It is important, then, in our consideration of Whitsuntide blessings, that we remember that without the fruits of the Spirit we would be nothing, and would have no share in the glorious Messianic Kingdom, for which we are waiting and praying, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as in Heaven."

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THE SOWING AND THE REAPING

--MAY 18.--GENESIS 42.--

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."--Galatians 6:7.

THE STORY of Joseph and his brethren continues. Today's lesson illustrates how the remembrance of their cruelty toward their brother Joseph, inspired by envy, continued to harass the evil-doers many long years after. Our Golden Text seems to lay down a general principle, applicable not only to the consecrated people of God, but to mankind in general. Whatsoever anybody sows wilfully, intelligently, will bring a harvest, a reaping, of similarly good or evil kind.

The famine was general throughout that region of the world. It included Palestine as well as Egypt. The word spread that there was no lack of food in Egypt, that there was corn there, sold at moderate prices, and that it belonged to the old stock. Jacob directed his sons, who were men of families themselves, to go down to Egypt and make purchases of wheat.

As strangers, they were directed to Joseph, who doubtless was on the lookout for them. He spoke to them through an interpreter, asking if they were not spies, coming to see how much wheat was in Egypt, that they might bring an army to steal it. They explained their situation truthfully. Joseph then inquired about his father and his younger brother Benjamin. Finally he put one of them into prison, and sent all the others home with corn, with the understanding that they would need more corn and might have plenty of it, as long as the famine lasted, provided that they should prove that they were not spies by bringing their youngest brother along with them. Meantime, Simeon would be held as hostage.

The guilty consciences of the brethren began to connect up these various experiences with their own wrong

course in the past. They said one to another, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, when we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us." They knew not that Joseph understood them, but he withdrew and wept. His heart was not hard. He was merely giving them a lesson that would be profitable for them in coming years.

The Scriptures represent that when the Messianic Kingdom will begin to shed its blessings abroad, the antitypical Joseph, Messiah, will likewise speak roughly to the people in a time of trouble, and cause them great vexation and worry as to what the outcome will be. But all the while the Lord's heart will be full of love and sympathy for the poor groaning creation, for whom He already has died, and in whose interest His Kingdom will be established. The time of trouble upon the world in the beginning of Messiah's reign will evidently be for the very purpose of preparing the hearts of mankind for the blessings which the Lord is so willing to bestow.

MANY STRIPES AND FEW STRIPES

When Jacob's ten sons arrived with their wheat, they told the whole story of their experience to their father. They explained why Simeon was not with them--that he was kept as a hostage. Moreover, they were perplexed to find that no money had been charged them for the wheat. The money they had paid for it was returned in each sack. Everything seemed strange to them, and the minds of the brethren continually adverted to the crime of years ago, in connection with their brother Joseph. Many times during those intervening years they had reaped crops of sorrow and fearful surmisings respecting what the providence of a just God might ultimately exact from them in the nature of trouble, similar to that which they had brought upon their brother.

How advantageous it would be to the whole world if this principle were generally recognized--if all realized the truthfulness of God's Word that every trespass must receive a just recompense of reward! We have lost such an appreciation of justice, and such a looking for a righteous retribution, in the fog of a very false doctrine, which has become prevalent. That false doctrine ascribes only the one punishment for every sin, and that an unthinkable one; viz., everlasting torture. In the first place, how few there are that really believe that doctrine or are really influenced by it! Its monstrosity makes it unbelievable, and turns the mind away from the proper view of the real punishments which God has foretold.

Added to this first inconsistency and its evil effect, we mention another, which associates itself thus: Our Catholic friends claim that by membership in the church they will escape eternal torment and get some lesser torment. And that theory seems so much more logical than the Protestant one that many accept it as the lesser evil of the two.

Then comes our Protestant theory that a man or a woman, the moment before death, may say, "God forgive me!" and immediately pass into Paradise, and escape all punishment for sins. These theories, we claim, are all injurious, as well as inconsistent. The Scriptural theory, we are sure, would be found the more effective, if it were preached, if it were believed.

That Scriptural theory is expressed in our Golden Text: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." If he sows a desire for cruelty, words of deceit, injustice, selfishness, evil speaking, slander, he will surely have a reaping time, and will gather rewards in harmony with his desire.

It is impossible for humanity to improve upon the Divine arrangement. Hence all Christian people should begin afresh to tell the world both of the Justice and the Love of God--that God's just penalty against sin is death, but that He has made provision through Christ for a release from that penalty, during Christ's Messianic reign of a thousand years. Then every member of Adam's race will be granted a full opportunity of reconciliation with God and of restoration to the image and likeness of God, lost for all by Father Adam's sin.

But meantime, each individual has a responsibility in respect to his every word and act and thought. To whatever extent he sins against light, knowledge and the Golden Rule, to the same extent he degrades his character, and thus makes his opportunity for return to the image and likeness of God the more difficult. He whose conscience becomes the most degraded will find the way for retracing his course the most difficult and steep.

According to this Divine rule, the Millennium may find heathen people more ready to go up on the Highway of Holiness than people of so-called Christian lands. The latter, having had more light, more privilege, more opportunity and sinning against greater knowledge, have seared their consciences more deeply. Of some such Jesus exclaimed, "How can ye escape the condemnation of Gehenna!"--the Second Death.

JACOB'S GRAY HAIRS FOR SHEOL

When poor old Jacob heard that Benjamin would be required to go on the next expedition for wheat, he demurred and declared that it must never be. Joseph was

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gone, and if now he should lose his youngest son, Benjamin, the grief would bring down his gray hairs quickly to Sheol--the tomb--the state of death.

In our common version English Bible this word Sheol is repeatedly translated Hell, Pit, and Grave. In olden times, these three English words were synonymous in meaning. As for instance, a man, speaking of burying so many bushels of potatoes in a pit, would call it helling

the potatoes. And when this term was used in respect to humanity, sometimes the word grave was used. Altogether, the word Sheol occurs sixty-six times, and more than one-half of these times it is translated pit and grave.

When the Revised Version was in preparation, the learned men charged with that work refused any longer to translate the word Sheol by the word Hell, because in the intervening centuries that word had gradually lost its original meaning and had come to have the significance of a place of fire and of torture. Since no such meaning attaches to the word Sheol in the Hebrew, these scholars refused to so translate it into English. To these facts they all agreed, but then came a dispute as to how it should be translated. Some would not agree to translate Sheol uniformly by the English word grave, or tomb, fearing that this would appear very radical to some Christian people.

Finally, as a compromise to settle the question, it was concluded that in all places where Sheol and the corresponding Greek word Hades had been translated Hell in our Common Version, the Hebrew word Sheol or the Greek word Hades should be substituted, and left without translation. If any of the people found out their meaning, it would be all right. If they did not find out, they might remain in ignorance, and still think of Hades and Sheol as signifying a place of torture. Our Baptist friends have recently met with a similar difficulty and have given the translation of Sheol and Hades as "the Underworld." Of course the grave, the tomb, the state of death, may be thus indicated, and no one can find fault.

It is needless to say that when Jacob spoke of his gray hairs as going down to Sheol, he did not mean his sons to understand that he expected to go to eternal torment. What he did mean is evident. He meant, "My sons, I am now old and gray-headed, and to lose this youngest son would hasten my death"--"bring down my gray hairs to Sheol, to the tomb." No one need question where Jacob's gray hairs would go. They did go to Sheol eventually, but not because of grief. Jacob's old age was made very happy by the fellowship of his sons, and by the realization that God had highly exalted Joseph to the rulership of Egypt.

OUR GOLDEN TEXT LESSON

Although St. Paul, as we have seen, made a general observation to the effect that whatsoever any man sows, that shall he also reap, nevertheless, he evidently used these words with particular reference to the experiences of the Church. The context makes such an application. The context applies these words directly to the consecrated people of God, assuring them that a consecration to be dead with Christ is not sufficient. On the contrary, God cannot be mocked, cannot be deceived, cannot be trifled with. If God has entered into a covenant with us, nothing else than our agreement will stand.

Then the Apostle recites the agreement which Christians covenant with the Lord. They covenant to sacrifice all earthly interests, aims, hopes, that thereby they may be pleasing and acceptable to God, and become heirs with Jesus of the incorruptible things to be attained on the other side the veil, as spirit beings, as New Creatures in Christ. He says, "He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." By this he means that if any Christian who has entered into this covenant with God to become dead to the will of the flesh and alive to the will of God, shall live after the flesh--according to its desires, its promptings, its leadings, its appetites--the end of that man's way will be death--the Second Death, symbolized by the Gehenna fire, which destroyed the offal outside the City of Jerusalem.

On the other hand, if any man sow to the spirit, if he live according to the New Creature, by living in harmony with his covenant of consecration--not merely making a start in the right direction--this would decide the matter in his favor. Some of the best people who have ever lived have made more or less serious blunders, under the temptations of the flesh. But stumbling into sin would not be living after the flesh--it would merely be a start to so live. The soul, rightly exercised by his sin, by the weakness, may recover itself, and come back to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, and in the name of Jesus obtain mercy and find grace to help for further time of need. But if these opportunities and privileges were not used, and if the course of living after the flesh were pursued, the result would be death.

So, on the other hand, to make a start to live a righteous, self-sacrificing life would not be sufficient; and to return to a righteous course, after having been overtaken in a fault and shedding some tears of penitence, would not be sufficient to recover him. But if we live after the Spirit, if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, then we shall gain the eternal life on the spirit plane which God has promised to all the faithful. But this matter of living after the Spirit is a great contract, and one that needs continual watchfulness and prayer, lest we be overtaken in a fault--lest we let these precious things of God's promise slip from us--lest we become overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches--lest our faith become weak and we faint by the way.

We need to have this thought definitely before our minds: While each act and word and thought has its bearing upon the ultimate results in every Christian's life, nevertheless no one thought, no one word, and no one deed carries the deciding weight, either for good or for evil. The more loyal we are, the more faithful we are, the fewer slips we shall make, the more like our Redeemer we shall be, and the brighter will be our reward, for as the Apostle declares, "As star differeth from star in glory, so also is The Resurrection of the Dead."

Those, then, who are of the world may know that

every good and every evil act of theirs will have a weight and influence in respect to their trial for life or death under the Messianic Kingdom arrangements. And every Christian who has entered into a covenant to become dead with Christ that he may also live with Him, to suffer with Christ that he may also reign with Him--all such should know that every word, every thought, every act, has a bearing upon the great results. Hence, as the Apostle says, all such should walk through life circumspectly, wisely, seeking to know and to do the things pleasing to God, and to attain the highest reward.

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THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT AND THE NEW COVENANT

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT is not the New Covenant, even as it is not the Law Covenant. The New Covenant is the name of that arrangement which God will make with Israel and all mankind who, during the period of Messiah's reign, desire to become "Israelites indeed." That New Covenant will be inaugurated as a measure for carrying out the blessings purposed in the Abrahamic Covenant.

The Abrahamic Covenant relates especially to the Seed of Abraham, which is to be made glorious and powerful, with a view to the blessing of the world. The New Covenant relates to the arrangement by which the antitypical Seed of Abraham, when glorified, will accomplish the honorable work assigned to it in the Abrahamic Covenant.

The fulfilment of the Abrahamic Covenant began in the person of our Lord Jesus, not when He left the Heavenly glory, nor when He was born a babe at Bethlehem, but when God accepted His consecration and begat Him to a new nature at the time of His baptism, perfecting Him in the new nature at His resurrection. The Man Jesus, before being begotten of the Holy Spirit, was not the Seed of Abraham according to promise, capable of blessing mankind; for so long as Jesus was in the flesh, even though perfect, the blessing of the world through Him was impossible. The world lay under a death sentence and could not be blessed until provision should be made for the lifting of that death sentence.

The provision of the Ransom, therefore, was necessary for the world. Jesus in the flesh, in providing the Ransom-price, would have had no life for Himself that He might become the King of Glory and Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Psa. 110:4; Heb. 5:10) unless God had begotten and quickened and raised Him to the higher, spirit nature. Hence, although Jesus, through His mother, was of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, He did not inherit this Abrahamic Covenant according

to the flesh, but as the New Creature.

In order, therefore, to attain this higher nature, in order to be the Spiritual Seed of Abraham and bless all the families of the earth, it was necessary for Jesus to enter into a special covenant of sacrifice. The Church, members of His Body, must share all His experiences and lay down the earthly life also; for whether Jews or Gentiles it would still be true that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom. Hence the privilege of the Church is to enter into the covenant of sacrifice with Jesus. Thus we read, "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."--Psa. 50:5.

It has required the entire Gospel Age for the gathering of these saints and the making of their sacrifices. Those sacrifices must be accomplished before they can attain to the Heavenly nature--before they can be members of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham and heirs according to the promise. Thus the Apostle declares, "Israel hath

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not obtained that which he seeketh for [to be the Spiritual Seed of Abraham]; but the Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."--Rom. 11:7.

The Election obtained this blessed state through the covenant of sacrifice, in which Jesus acted as their Advocate. The first members were accepted at Pentecost. The last members, we trust, will soon finish their course with joy. Then the Spiritual Seed of Abraham will be complete and ready to serve the world as the great antitypical Mediator--of the New Covenant.

The Abrahamic Covenant was God's own Covenant, or promise. Because it was unconditional, it has no mediator (Gal. 3:19,20), neither did it need to be sealed with blood. Rather, we might say that God sealed it with His oath. (Heb. 6:16-18.) The Law Covenant needed the blood of bulls and goats as an offset to the sins of the people, who were to be blessed typically. The New Covenant needs the blood of better sacrifices as satisfaction for the sins of the people, who are to be blessed actually. These two Covenants could not go into effect without the shedding of blood and the remission of sins.--Heb. 9:18-22.

But the Abrahamic Covenant centers itself in the New Creatures. From the first, God meant primarily the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, the New Creation, which has never known sin. Jesus Himself was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and needed not any atonement for sin in order to enter into that Covenant relationship and become Abraham's Spiritual Seed and Heir. Those accepted as His members would have had no such standing or worthiness except as He adopted them as His members, imputed His own merit to them and offered them sacrificially as His own flesh.

Hence, strictly speaking, we cannot say that the Abrahamic Covenant has ever been sealed with blood, or

that it will ever be so sealed. This does not alter the fact, however, that not without blood (death) could Jesus have become the great antitypical Prophet, Priest and King; and not without blood (death) could we, His members, be accepted through Him. Only in this indirect way can it be said that the Abrahamic Covenant is sealed with blood. St. Paul intimates that it was sealed by the oath of Jehovah.--Heb. 6:13-18.

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AN INTERESTING QUESTION

Question.--Is there any way of determining our standing before God?

Answer.--The Apostle John says that "If our hearts condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God." (I John 3:21.) In order that we may begin to measure ourselves and our progress, to know whether or not we are pleasing God in the affairs of life, we must know first of all whether we have taken steps to come into His family. Have we made a full consecration of ourselves to do the Divine will? If we know that we have made a full consecration of ourselves, the next question should be, To what extent do I know God's will, and to what extent am I seeking to do it? Do I use my time, strength, influence and all that I have, sacrificially, to the best of my ability, not counting my life dear unto myself? If we find that in a general way this is the course we are following, then there is every reason for us to have great satisfaction.

Then we find that the thing to be expected is that all those who will "live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.) If we find that we have not this witness of the Spirit, if we have no persecution, then we have not been letting our light shine out. This should not lead us into anything foolish, but we should examine ourselves to see whether we are laying down our lives in His service. If we find no suffering in the present time, it should be a cause of perplexity to us.

If we find persecutions, then we should make sure that our persecutions are not from any wrong which we have done ourselves, nor from busybodying in other men's matters, but that we are suffering for the Truth's sake, for the brethren's sake. If we have these evidences that we have come into God's family, if we are studying to know and to do His will, if we are having trials and difficulties in the pathway and are being rightly exercised thereby, we may count ourselves as His faithful people.