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THE MEMORIAL SUPPER--1914

Friday evening, April 10th, after 6 o'clock, will be the proper date for the celebration of the Memorial Supper, according to the lunar or Jewish reckoning--Nisan, 14th, twenty-four hours in advance of the Jewish Passover--Nisan, 15th.

HOW YOU CAN ASSIST US

Our dear readers can save much of our time:

By writing their letters plainly.

By putting their full address at the head of the letter.

By putting their orders on a separate piece of paper from their other correspondence.

By giving our file reference in replying to any communications from our office. Write "File A," "File B" or "File R," as the case may be, on face of your addressed envelope or postal card and at beginning of your letter.

Some, we notice, are using a small rubber stamp for their address. This is convenient and may also be used for stamping return address on your envelopes.

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

When sending remittances to the Society, please remember to make them payable in all cases to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

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BETHEL HYMNS FOR FEBRUARY

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 February follow: (1) 14; (2) 208; (3) 46; (4) 147; (5) 311; (6) 43; (7) Vow; (8) 145; (9) 12; (10) 259; (11) 65; (12) 78; (13) 221; (14) 105; (15) 34; (16) 240; (17) 307; (18) 313; (19) 87; (20) 303; (21) 113; (22) 130; (23) 152; (24) 286; (25) 176; (26) 300; (27) 191; (28) 224.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

FROM every point of view the Year 1914 seems big with possibilities. The headlines of all the newspapers of the world tell that our Master's prediction of nearly nineteen centuries ago is being fulfilled--"Men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" in the present social order of affairs. Evidences multiply on every hand that the teachings of the Colleges for the past thirty years along the lines of human Evolution and destructive Higher Criticism of the Bible are bearing their fruitage. What only the educated and the wealthy a few years ago knew respecting these matters, people of all classes now know. Doubts about the inspiration of the Bible have led people to guess for themselves and to realize that all who reject the Bible are merely guessing at the future.

This matter affects the industrial classes as it does not affect the wealthy and the learned. The industrial classes, with little financial backing, do not feel satisfied with their own or other men's guesses respecting a future life. The next logical process of their minds is to inquire how we may know that there is a God, and in general to doubt everything. The next step in order is a determination to make the most of the present life, in view of their uncertainty about the future one. Under such conditions, can we wonder that Socialism in its various forms and phases is growing--that a general spirit of doubt and discontent is increasing?

So long as employment continues at profitable wages, the majority of these people are too cautious to desire a wreck of the social system, through whose operation they have a comfortable living and by whose destruction their comforts might be diminished. The world, therefore, must face the fact that, if dire necessity comes, as it has done in the past, the common people, the artisans of the world, will meet the situation differently from what their fathers did. Faith in God and in the Bible shaken--gone with most of them--we may be assured that a stoppage of the wheels of industry would speedily bring a terrible Time of Trouble to the civilized world. And these very conditions are threatened at the present time. It is on this account that many of the rich and influential are trembling as they face the near future.

The man or the woman possessed of a hope beyond the grave has in the storms of life an anchorage for the soul which others do not have. Should the time come, soon or later, when the social fabric will be stretched to the breaking point, when banks suspend payment of money to their depositors, when factories and mills are closed, when people are hungry, we may be sure that a roar and an explosion will not be long deferred. This awful condition is just what the Bible portrays. So far

as our judgment goes, the Year 1914 is the last one of what the Bible terms "Gentile Times"--the period in which God has allowed the nations of the earth to do their best to rule the world. The end of their "Times" marks the date for the beginning of Messiah's Kingdom, which the Bible declares is to be ushered in with a great Time of Trouble, just such as we see impending.

As already pointed out, we are by no means confident that this year, 1914, will witness as radical and swift changes of Dispensation as we have expected. It is beyond the power of our imagination to picture an accomplishment in one year of all that the Scriptures seem to imply should be expected before the Reign of Peace is ushered in.

Letters from all over the world assure us that the sentiment of THE WATCH TOWER readers is in full accord with that of the Editor in a resolution that, whatever may occur or may not occur during these years, our faith in the great Divine Plan of the Ages and in the Harvest shall not be one bit shaken. We know in whom we have believed. We consecrated our lives to His service--even unto death, whether that death shall come within this year or at another time.

The signs of the times clearly indicate the near approach of the very trouble for which we have for forty years been looking. The signs of the Son of Man in the wonderful inventions and progress of the world are manifest to us. We believe that the Parousia of our Redeemer took place thirty-nine years ago and that He is the potent Factor in all the affairs of His Church and the Supervisor now of the conditions which will shortly lead up to the establishment of His own Kingdom and the binding of Satan, the Prince of Darkness.

We believe that the Year 1914 gives evidence of greater possibilities of service for the Truth than has any previous year of the Harvest. Moreover, all those who have tasted of the good Word of God and who are rejoicing in the light of Present Truth seem to be actuated by zeal for God and for His Cause and for His people, both in Babylon and out of Babylon, more than ever before. Besides, the number of these fully consecrated ones increases every day. Also the conditions are

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favorable to the opening of the eyes of understanding and the unstopping of the deaf ears of our dear brethren of various denominations.

Let us be more than ever on the alert, therefore, to be used and useful in the service of our King. Let us remember that the moments and the hours are important, that no matter how many cares of life we may have, we can always find some time for the service of the Truth, not only in our own hearts and homes, but also in doing good to all men as we have opportunity, especially to the Household of Faith.

While watching for the consummation, while realizing that it will bring the Time of Trouble, while seeking to be as fully prepared as possible for whatever share we may have in that Trouble, let us not unduly emphasize this feature of the Divine Plan in presenting matters to our Christian friends of the world. Let us more and more cultivate a sobriety of mind, a loving tenderness of disposition, which will seek to tell only so much as may be necessary to be known. Let us emphasize the goodness of God and the great blessing that is in store for mankind and the nearness of this blessing and the grand results to be obtained. Let us tell that the fulfilment of our Lord's prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," is close at hand!

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"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND"

"For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come; it will not tarry."--Habakkuk 2:3.

GOD'S PLAN OF THE AGES is the vision seen by the Prophet Habakkuk, who was told to write it and to "make it plain upon tables, that every one may read it fluently" (Leeser's translation); that in the end the vision should "speak and not lie;" though it would seem to tarry, yet it would not tarry. It would seem to all that the great Plan of God was long delayed. The groaning creation would think the Heavenly Father was very slack. Many would be inclined to lose their faith in respect to the Seed of Abraham, and to think that God had forgotten the promise which He had made to Abraham. We know that disappointments have come to God's people along this line. The Jews were disappointed in their expectations. Christians in this Laodicean period were disappointed at first, not clearly understanding what to expect.

During the early persecutions of the Church, it was believed that those who suffered would soon enter into glory. They thought the Kingdom was near. Some of the disappointed ones continued to wait and hope and pray. Others organized the great Papal System, and declared that the Church should have her glory now, that the Kingdom of Messiah was here, and that the representatives of Messiah should sit upon a throne and personate Messiah and bring the kingdoms of the world into subjection. They were evidently led to this by Messiah's not coming at the time expected, and they thought that they must bring about a fulfilment of the Scriptures which foretold His Coming and Reign.

TIME FEATURES UNPOPULAR

This has brought serious disaster in many respects; it has made all Christendom "drunk." (Rev. 17:2.) Many, even today, are in bewilderment. Some, getting out of that darkness, have stumbled into other errors. The majority have lost all faith in prophecy. God foreknew all these things and foretold them, and they will not interfere with the Divine Program. Just as the wrong impression that our Lord was born in Nazareth was a reflection upon Him, so that many would not accept Him as the long promised Messiah, so these have said, Can any good thing come out of the prophecies, or anything relating to the Second Coming of Messiah? These people who proclaim His Second Advent are laboring under a hallucination! Are not the things written in the prophecies merely fanciful dreams of men--of the rebuilding of Zion and the restitution of Jerusalem?

Thus they scoff. They are inclined to feel an opposition to everything in the Scriptures regarding the return of our Lord to accomplish His foretold work. The Lord tells us that although the vision may seem to tarry, yet we are to exercise faith, because in the end it will speak; it will make itself heard, and will not lie. It will then be seen to be the Truth. The Divine Plan of the Ages is to be made plain upon tables. It will be made so very plain to us that he who runs may read. He who is asleep may not read; he who is drunken with the wine of false doctrine may not read; he who is standing in the way of sinners may not read. But he who runs may read, if his heart be teachable and pure.

"REST IN THE LORD"

This vision is to be made clear at the appointed time. We may not read the time features with the same absolute certainty as doctrinal features; for time is not so definitely stated in the Scriptures as are the basic doctrines. We are still walking by faith and not by sight. We are, however, not faithless and unbelieving, but faithful and waiting. If later it should be demonstrated that the Church is not glorified by October, 1914, we shall try to feel content with whatever the Lord's will may be. We believe that very many who are running the race for the prize will be able to thank God for the chronology, even if it should prove not accurate to the year, or even out of the way several years. We believe that the chronology is a blessing. If it should wake us a few minutes earlier or a few hours earlier in the Morning than we would otherwise have waked, well and good! It is those who are awake who get the blessing.

If 1915 should go by without the passage of the Church, without the Time of Trouble, etc., it would seem to some to be a great calamity. It would not be so with ourself. We shall be as glad as any one if we shall all experience our change from earthly to spirit conditions before 1915,

and THIS IS OUR EXPECTATION; but if this should not be the Lord's will, then it would not be our will. If in the Lord's providence the time should come twenty-five years later, then that would be our will. This would not change the fact that the Son of God was sent by the Father, and that the Son is the Redeemer of our race; that He died for our sins; that He is selecting the Church for His Bride; and that the next thing now in order is the establishment of the glorious Kingdom at the hands of this great Mediator, who during His Mediatorial Reign will bless all the families of the earth. These facts remain the same. The difference would be merely that of a few years in the time of the establishment of the Kingdom.

If October, 1915, should pass, and we should find ourselves still here and matters going on very much as they are at present, and the world apparently making progress in the way of settling disputes, and there were no time of trouble in sight, and the nominal Church were not yet

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federated, etc., we would say that evidently we have been out somewhere in our reckoning. In that event we would look over the prophecies further, to see if we could find an error. And then we would think, Have we been expecting the wrong thing at the right time? The Lord's will might permit this. Our expectation as a Church is that our change is near. Nothing of Restitution blessings can come to the world until after the Church has been glorified.

Another thing to be considered, should our hopes not be so soon realized as we expect, would be as to whether we were surely of the elect class. But we are not worrying ourself at all. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." There are no people in the world so blessed as those who have the Truth and are serving the Truth. There is plenty of work to do.

UNREST ON EVERY SIDE

The remainder of mankind are dissatisfied--not only the nominal Church, the professedly godly, but all others also. They are disappointed in all they undertake to do. There is failure on every hand. Not long since we were speaking to a business man, and our conversation turned to religious matters. He is a very fine man; whether a Christian or not we do not know. We find that there are a great many pleasant and very honorable people who are not Christians at all. This man, speaking of the Churches, said, "It is a sad thing--the condition of the Churches. I am particularly interested in the Methodist denomination. Some time ago our Church had a fortunate sale of their property, and they purchased a new site and built a fine church. And they think now that if there are sixty who attend service there it is a good congregation. And it is the same elsewhere. People are

all going pleasure-mad. Every one wants to go on some pleasure excursion--to the beach, or what not. No one seems to care for religion now." This man voiced the general spirit of disappointment. But a better Day is near.

In San Francisco, a year or more ago, at a Sunday School Convention, one speaker gave quite a long address on getting the children into the Church. He said that the whole Church institution was likely to be foundered. He said that every member brought into any of the Churches had cost six hundred and fifty dollars. Then he proceeded to tell how many workers were employed, and yet they were bringing only these comparatively few into the Church.

And we know that the great majority of those who are brought in would not think of calling themselves saints, or of professing consecration at all. This gentleman seemed to think that there is not much in the Gospel for a mature mind. He said that the way to do was to train a child up for the church, and then he could not get away from it. Yet the statistics show that out of the thousands in Sunday Schools only a very small number ever go into the church.

SORROW AT MAGNITUDE OF OUR WORK

Some say they are sorry that our sermons are being printed in the newspapers all over this country, Great Britain, etc.; and that our seats are free, and that no collections are taken. One minister said, "By and by people will think it is a crime to take up a collection, and then where shall we be? Pastor Russell is bringing us all into disrepute." Another thing they say is, "When those doctrines are preached, they influence the best ones that we have."

So we have every reason to feel that it is wonderful, very wonderful, that when we are comparatively so few, and with so comparatively small an amount of money used, we have so great privileges and opportunities in the Lord's service. In EVERYBODY'S PAPER was given, more than two years ago, the report of the American Tract Society, and next to it was given the report of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. The former showed "excess of assets over liabilities, \$851,092.53." The latter showed no assets in excess of liabilities. The reports show that the one without excess of assets is putting out vastly more literature than the other. We think this goes to show that we have miracles in our day.

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A FAMINE--BUT NOT FOR BREAD

When we were in Boston some time ago, an Editor of a Boston religious journal said to us on the Monday following our discourse, "I was at your meeting yesterday;

I saw that immense congregation. I looked it all over and said to myself, What is it that brings these people here? I remembered that there were seaside attractions, parks--everything to induce people to stay away. Yet on that warm summer afternoon there were four thousand present at the meeting, and two thousand turned away. We have many ministers in Boston, good choirs, and everything to attract; but these ministers at this time of the year have only forty or fifty at their services. How is it that so many came out to your meeting, and sat there for two hours?"

We replied that it seems to us that we are seeing the fulfilment of the prophecy: "There shall be a famine in the land, not a famine for bread nor a thirst for water, but for hearing the Word of the Lord." (Amos 8:11,12.) We further remarked that the people have been feeding on very unsatisfactory nourishment, and that they are not satisfied with the chaff they have been receiving, and that they do not go to the churches for the reason that they do not believe in the eternal torment doctrine--the preachers do not believe it, and nobody believes it, except a comparatively small number, and that number is constantly diminishing.

We reminded him that these people, instead of hearing of eternal torment, now have offered them suggestions from the colleges to the effect that their forefathers were monkeys; that there are large interrogation points in the minds of the people; that they are hungry to know the Truth. We told him that we believe this accounts for the large number present to hear us, that they were hearing something more rational, something more Biblical, than they had heard before. So we have everything for which to be thankful.

"OUR DELIVERANCE DRAWETH NIGH"

So far as we have been able to see up to the present time, the failure of a full development of matters in 1915, or before, would imply that all the chronological arrangements, as we have them, are wrong--our view of the Harvest and all. And we have no reason to believe that these are wrong. We remember that we are not infallible, and that our judgment is not infallible; but the wonderful inventions of today, and the light that is dawning in every direction, as well as the universal unrest, seem in corroboration of the chronology--that we are in the dawning of the New Age. But just how far along we are we do not positively know. We are waiting for the Sun of Righteousness to appear.

The fact that the Vision is now speaking, and is made plain upon tables, is very convincing. We believe truly that "the days are at hand, and the effect [matter or thing (as spoken)] of every vision."--Ezek. 12:21-23.

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THE GREAT PRIVILEGE OF TRUE SERVICE

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a Ransom for many."--Matthew 20:28.

THE word minister has the same import as the word serve. The Master tells us that the purpose of His coming into the world was not a selfish one. He had been quite content with the glory and honor which He had with the Father before the world was. (John 17:5.) While it is true that the Savior is now exalted to a position very much higher than His previous one, yet He assures us that it was not with the spirit, the desire, for exaltation that He came into the world. On the contrary, He wished to serve. He said, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God! Thy Law is written in My heart."--Psalm 40:8.

In obedience to this Divine will, our Lord left the glory which He had with the Father, came down to earth and gave Himself up to death, even the death of the cross. On the night of His betrayal and arrest He said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" He was obedient even unto the end.

Before coming into the world, our Lord had perceived that mankind was in need of a Savior, and no doubt this had to do with His gladly accepting the Divine arrangement. He saw something of the Father's purpose in regard to fallen humanity. And when, during His earthly life, He saw these poor creatures in sin, degradation and weakness, He did not try to make them slaves. He did not try to use His power, His intelligence, selfishly for His own comfort; but He laid down His life unselfishly. He set Himself to work out the Plan which the Father had arranged.

Our Lord came not to be ministered unto. He did not come into the world to have servants and to get all that He could in return for the expenditure of a small amount of His own energy. He came not from any selfish motive whatever, but to serve others--to do good. As He Himself testified, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This He did in harmony with the Father's Plan.

We do not understand, however, that our Lord refused to have any one serve Him. He accepted service from others. The thought of our text is that He came to render a service; not that He might be served; and in order that He might carry out His purpose it was necessary for Him to become a servant. Had there been no need for that service, we cannot think that the Lord would have humbled Himself and taken the bondman's form, or have undergone the severe trials of His earthly existence. But He came to render a service that was

necessary to the well-being, happiness, yea, the very life of the entire human family.

Through Adam's disobedience sin had entered into the world. God's Law pronounced the penalty of death for that sin. Thus the whole race of mankind was perishing; and if they were ever to be rescued, so that they would not perish like brute beasts, they must be redeemed. According to the Divine Law, there must be a Ransom-price for the first perfect man, who had sinned. The Only Begotten was willing to meet this necessity. He rejoiced to do this work, to be the servant, the minister of God for this purpose, because of the need of the service, because it would bring blessing to others.

This is the spirit that should actuate every one of us. We should desire to incorporate into our character this principle of service. We should not serve merely because we like to work, like to be busy, but because we perceive there is a work necessary, and we are glad to lay down our lives in this blessed service.

THE ATTITUDE OF TRUE CONSECRATION

There are some who think it necessary to wash the feet of others. But since there is no real good to be accomplished by such a ceremony--nothing desirable--there is no reason why it should be performed. We cannot think that Jesus would have washed His disciples' feet unless they had needed washing. But if at any time we can thus render a real service, any of us should be glad of the opportunity to serve a fellow-member of the Body of Christ--by washing his feet, or in any manner. The thought is to appreciate the privilege of real service, rather than the opportunity of doing something merely because it is menial. Jesus did what He did because it was helpful service, and was the Father's will. He wished also to teach His disciples that they should not be above doing the humblest service for each other as brethren. In addition, Jesus' words on this occasion seemed to emphasize the thought of the need of daily cleansing of the Lord's disciples from earth-defilement. See John 13:6-10.

The laying down of our Lord's life was accomplished moment by moment, day by day, in teaching, in healing the sick, the deaf, the blind, and in instructing His disciples. In nothing did He seek to serve Himself. Therefore the record is, "He went about doing good." We should make application of this principle to ourselves; for "as He was, so are we, in this world." The attitude of true consecration is that we walk in Jesus' steps, and that we seek to know the Father's will in order to do it. This implies that we be Bible students, like the Bereans of old, who "searched the Scriptures daily."

If we have the Master's spirit, we shall be desirous of "doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto them who are of the Household of Faith." (Galatians 6:10.) And this is the advice of St. Paul,

who urged that we be followers of himself, even as he followed Christ. The lives of Jesus and the Apostles stand out very distinctly on the pages of history as notable for their unselfish service of others.

Many have lorded it over God's heritage. The context shows that our Lord had this class in mind. He declares that the rulers of the Gentiles exercised authority over their people; and that this was at the expense of the ruled, and was very rarely accompanied by a desire to serve the people.

SELFISHNESS UNFITS FOR THE KINGDOM

We see how our Master came to use the words of our text. The disciples were afflicted with a common ailment --love of honor of men and also love of honor of the Lord. Two of them had made an earnest request to have a place of special honor in His Kingdom. Their request aroused a spirit of indignation among the other ten, and a controversy resulted. They had the thought fixed in their minds that Jesus had promised them a share in the Kingdom. (Matthew 19:27-29.) If it had been wrong for them to have this promise in mind, it would have been wrong for the Lord to give them the promise. But they failed to see that the Father would give that place to none who would not manifest fullest loyalty to Him and to His Word.

The disciples had at that time a certain amount of false dignity, or pride, that would have made them unfit for a place in the Throne. Hence the Lord reminded them that the conditions upon which a seat in the Throne would be given to any one were that such a one should

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manifest so great loyalty to the principles of God's Government, and so great humility of spirit, that he would be glad to render service to any one in need. And He set Himself forth as an Example.

We paraphrase our Lord's words: Do you think that I left Heaven and came down to earth that people might serve Me? No. The conditions to which I have come are very inferior to those which I left. But the Father gave Me the privilege of service in this matter, and I am glad to have this service, because it is the Divine will. I have come to minister, to serve, to give My life as a Ransom-price for all.

This thought, then, He set before them--that they should rejoice in the privilege of service--rejoice in having the privilege of doing something really helpful to others, especially the brethren in the Body of Christ. As we apply this principle broadly, we see how it is exemplified in the world, in the affairs of every day life. The whole human family are servants. One man serves as a jeweler; another as a manufacturer of woolen goods. He serves by buying wool, converting it into cloth

and into garments. Another serves as a grocer and supplies food. Some are chiropodists; some, barbers; some, tailors; some, physicians; etc. In every case it is a service to others.

Bringing the matter still lower, we see that the principle extends even to service of the dumb brutes. A horse cannot curry himself; and even a hog needs to be served--needs a trough, a bed, and food. We in turn are served by the brute creation. Whoever separates himself from this arrangement of service is getting away from his own good, and violating a Law of the Universe. Whoever gets to the place where he does no service, but has others to serve him, is to be pitied. He will be unhappy, be he ever so wealthy. Whoever would take this attitude would be arrogant and selfish, and his life would be devoid of beauty or of worth.

SERVICE A DELIGHT TO THE CHRISTIAN

The true Christian enters into the spirit of service, as did his Master, and delights to do a good turn to any one as he has opportunity. If there are those who are helpless, who are sick, these are calls upon his services as he has ability and is able to lend a helping hand. We are to serve all men "as we have opportunity, especially those who are of the Household of Faith."

Where shall we draw the line? The answer is that we must use moderation. We find ourselves every day passing by services that others have needed, but that we have not been able to perform. How then shall we regulate the matter, since we cannot do all that we would? Our own family should be our first charge, or responsibility. He who neglects his own is worse than an unbeliever. Charity begins at home. If we have responsibilities there, we could not give so much comfort, so much time, so much money, to others as we would to those of our own family.

LAZINESS NOT TO BE ENCOURAGED

Those who have money have a talent that they can use in doing good. They will not find very much opportunity so far as the world is concerned. Even if we had millions of dollars, the spirit of a sound mind should govern us in its expenditure. To give money to encourage anybody in wastefulness, slothfulness and idleness would be to misuse it, and not to do good. God Himself declared, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." The happiest people are those who are employed; the most unhappy are those who have nothing to do, those who have no ambition.

We cannot do even for our own families all that we would wish to do; for in the case of our own there is often a lack of appreciation. Some of our relatives would never have enough. We could never do sufficient for them. We should exercise the spirit of a sound mind,

then, in deciding what to do. Let us ever remember that when we have entered the service of the Lord we are given a new commission, a special work to do in the world.

What kind of service are we then given? It is the service of ambassador of the Lord. We are to preach the Truth wherever there is an ear to hear and an eye to discern. Those who have not the hearing ear and the seeing eye might rend us, as the Master foretold. (Matthew 7:6.) We are therefore to use the spirit of a sound mind in discriminating between those who are good subjects for the Truth, and those who are not.

We say to the Master, Lord, we will give all of our time to Thee and to Thy Truth. Then He replies, But you are not to go ragged or naked, in order that you may preach the Gospel. It is proper that you provide the things needful. But do not think to get a certain amount of money laid up for yourself first, and then afterwards go and proclaim the Kingdom.

We may ask, Does this excuse us, Lord, from doing anything for our fellowmen and for our own families? He answers that we should not neglect our own families, but should care for them according to their necessities. We are, however, to guide our affairs with economy. If our family fail to do their part, and will not put forth any effort when of sufficient age and able to earn a livelihood for themselves, then we are to do nothing for them; for having their own strength, they do not need our assistance. We are to do for them only the things that are needful. We believe this is the mind of the Lord.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS STEWARDS

While we are to do good to all men, yet our special service is to be rendered in the Lord's work, the work of the Father--in dispensing the Truth. But while we are so doing, we may be able to speak a kind word to those with whom we come in contact. If we have money we may help in that way. But we should remember that we do not own even a penny of what we possess, or a moment of our time. All belongs to the Lord and should be spent along the lines of spiritual things, except where there is real necessity along earthly lines. To be sure, the world will not esteem us so much as if we would do more along earthly lines; but we have not received our commission from the world.

We perceive that the spirit of the Lord Jesus has had great influence in the world. It has made a deep impression upon noble souls, and has led them to the establishment of Orphans' Homes, Hospitals for the blind, Homes for the incurable, etc.; and these institutions are provided for by the public. It is recognized today to be proper to provide for those unable to provide for themselves. Since the world has settled this matter from a business point of view, the Lord's people are excused from personal responsibility which they have as God's

ambassadors. It is the proper thing to care for the sick and the maimed; but because the city and state have provided, individual responsibility is largely lifted.

There are wealthy people who say, I prefer to look after my sick friends myself, and send them to a high-priced institution. If any do so, this is their own business. They may also say, I prefer to live in a million dollar house. This, too, is their own business. They have a right to do so; and they may also have their automobiles and private yachts for pleasure, etc. But with the Christian it is different. All he possesses belongs to

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the Lord. He therefore is in a different position from any others. He is not to be like the world. All that he does is for God--because of his relationship to Him as a son. "Now are we the sons of God."

THE HUMBLE TO BE EXALTED

In the words of our text, the Master was instructing His disciples that they should not desire to rule--that He desired as His followers those who had most of His spirit of humility and service. If any man were to exalt himself, they were to have correspondingly a lower esteem for him; for "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The Lord will send the experiences which will exalt or abase, and it is for us to show our appreciation where we see the right principles in operation. Whoever manifests most of the Spirit of Christ is to be highest in our esteem. Whoever has less of the Spirit of Christ is to be lower in our esteem. These characteristics are to be quietly observed by us.

The basis upon which the world operates is selfishness. This is the secret of war, rebellion, revolution, etc. --one party and another seeking selfishly to control riches, honor, power or authority. We are delighted, as Christians, to note the difference in the spirit which we are of. We are to remember that we are by nature "children of wrath even as others." We are not to suppose that we shall be changed instantly; but the mind will be changed, we shall grow more Christlike. And as New Creatures in Christ we are to keep a diligent watch lest the service we are so desirous of rendering to the Lord become vitiated more or less, after the fashion of the spirit of the world.

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN A SERVICE

Our Lord, when He takes His great power to reign, will not have the same motive as have the rulers of the present time--merely to assume power for His own glory and for vaunting Himself. He will, indeed, have great power and authority, but it will be in harmony with

what the Heavenly Father has arranged. It will be a

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manifestation of glory and power, not to crush the world, but to bless and uplift it. This work will be accomplished from the standpoint of service, with a view to helping mankind to be the real rulers of the world; for the Messianic Kingdom will cease when the world shall be able to take care of itself.

We perceive that this is the way it was purposed from the first. The Heavenly Father made man the king of earth. God crowned man with glory and honor, and set him over the works of His hands. (Psalm 8:5,6; Hebrews 2:7.) It is not His purpose to keep mankind under the iron rod forever. The rod will be merely for temporary service, for man's true development, that the race may be brought back to the full blessing of their original privilege as kings of earth.

The Lord's Kingdom, we see, will be very different from any other ever instituted. Our service, as members of Christ's Body, will be the same as His. We shall share with Him in the uplifting of humanity. "God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."-- Ephesians 2:6,7.

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WHO MAY PRAY AND FOR WHAT?

--FEBRUARY 1.--LUKE 11:1-13.--

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."--LUKE 11:9.

APPARENTLY Jesus usually prayed alone. We read that on some occasions He spent the entire night in prayer to God. How inconsistent that would have been if He Himself were the Father, who for a time was with men and outwardly appeared as the "Man Christ Jesus"! But how consistent is the thought of Jesus' prayer to the Father when taken in connection with His own declaration: "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28); "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John 6:38); "Of Mine own self I can do nothing; as I hear [of My Father], I judge."--John 5:30.

Instead of being the Father masquerading as a man, Jesus was the Logos, the Word, or Message of God, whom

the Father had sanctified and sent into the world to be the world's Redeemer, and who by and by is to be its King, to deliver it from the power of Satan and sin, and to restore the willing and obedient to the Divine likeness, the Father's favor and everlasting life.--Isaiah 25:6-8; Romans 8:21.

Realizing the importance of His mission, Jesus kept properly in touch with the great Author of the Plan of Salvation, His Heavenly Father. His prayers were not mockeries; they were sincere. He worshiped the Father

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in spirit and in truth, as He declared all must do who would be acceptable to the Father.

No doubt the disciples noted the Master's frequency in prayer, and the blessing which He seemed to receive therefrom. Instead of urging them to pray, Jesus by His example taught them to desire the privilege and blessing of prayer. In due time they requested instruction, saying, "Lord, teach us to pray!" It is well that we inquire who may pray, and for what things we may petition the great Creator, else we might be praying without authority, or praying amiss, as St. James declares some do.

There is a difference between worship--adoration, homage--and prayer. Any one may offer homage to the Lord, bow the knee or express thanks and appreciation. But as for making requests of God, prayers, this privilege is distinctly limited. The Jews were privileged to offer prayer, because they as a nation were in typical relationship with God under the Law Covenant, as a "House of Servants." But the Gentiles had no privilege of approaching God in prayer until after the Jewish favor had ended--three and a half years after the crucifixion of Jesus.

The first Gentile whose prayers were received, according to the Bible, was Cornelius. And even his prayers were not acceptable until he had been instructed respecting Christ and His redemption work and had become a follower of Jesus. Then his prayers and his consecration were acceptable to the Father, and he was received into the family of God as a son. Then as a son he had the right or privilege of prayer.--Acts 10:25-48.

So today while any one may offer worship and reverence to God, none is privileged to pray unless he has become a consecrated disciple of Jesus, except it be the immature children of such consecrated persons. All over the world today's lesson will be misinterpreted. Jesus' words, "Our Father," will be misinterpreted to signify the "Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." The

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context will be ignored. The fact that these were consecrated disciples, and not mankind in general, who were instructed to pray "our Father," will be ignored.

There is a general tendency to ignore personal faith in the redeeming blood--to ignore the fact that no man cometh unto the Father but by the Son. (John 14:6.) Adam indeed was created a son of God; but his disobedience and death sentence cancelled the relationship, which cannot be restored except in God's appointed way--through Christ. Prayer is a wonderful privilege. It is not for sinners, but for those who have been justified by the great Advocate whom the Father has appointed--Jesus.

"AFTER THIS MANNER PRAY"

The model prayer which Jesus gave His followers is grandly simple. It is devoid of selfishness. Instead of "I" and "me," the prayer is comprehensive of all who are truly the Lord's people, in any class--we, us, our. It is unselfish, too, in that it is not a prayer for earthly blessings. Only one petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," can be construed to apply to even the simplest of earthly blessings. And this may also be understood to signify more particularly spiritual nourishment.

The prayer opens with a reverent acknowledgment of the greatness and sacredness of the Heavenly Father's name, or character. Next comes an acknowledgment of the present condition of sin in the world and an acknowledgment of faith in the promise that God has given, that eventually His Kingdom shall be established in the earth, and shall overthrow the reign of Sin and Death which has prevailed for six thousand years, and will bind Satan, "the Prince of this world." (Rev. 20:1-3.) The petition, "Thy Kingdom come," not only manifests faith in God and in His promise to abolish sin and establish righteousness in the earth, but it means more; namely, that the suppliant is in his heart in sympathy with God and His righteousness and out of sympathy with the reign of Sin and Death.

The next petition is, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven." This signifies full confidence in the promise of God that His Kingdom when it shall be established will not be a failure--that Satan will be bound; that the reign of Sin and Death will end; that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth and triumph, destroying all wilful opposers, until finally every knee shall be bowing and every tongue confessing, to the glory of God.

It is an expression of confidence that the Kingdom will effect the full restoration of the earth to its Edenic condition and of man to his primeval perfection in the image of his Creator; for not until such conditions prevail will it be possible for God's will to be as perfectly done on earth as it is now done in Heaven. An included thought is that when sin and death shall thus have been effaced, the world of mankind will be as happy in God's favor as are the angels now. This Jesus clearly expressed later, assuring us that eventually there will be no more sighing, crying or dying, because all the former things of

sin and death will have passed away.--Rev. 21:5.

The request for daily bread implies our realization that our sustenance, both temporal and spiritual, must come from God. And the failure to specify any particular kind of food implies not only a hunger and desire on our part, but a full resignation to the provision of Divine Wisdom.

When the justified pray, "Forgive us our trespasses," they do not refer to Original Sin; for they were freed from that condemnation in their justification. By trespasses are signified those unintentional imperfections which appertain to all, and which all the followers of Jesus are striving to overcome. The request that we shall have forgiveness of our blemishes as we are generous and forgiving toward those who trespass against us is a reminder of the general terms of our relationship to God. We cannot grow in grace and abide in the sunshine of God's favor except as we cultivate the spirit of love, which is the spirit of God--a forgiving spirit, a generous spirit, in our dealings with others. God thus purposes to favor more especially those who particularly strive to exemplify His gracious mercy.

"Abandon us not in temptation" indicates that we are aware that we are surrounded by the powers of evil, and that as New Creatures we would be unable to withstand these successfully except as we should have Divine aid. "Deliver us from the Evil One" is a recognition that Satan is our great Adversary; and that we are on the alert to resist him, and yet realize our own insufficiency, our need of Divine aid. "We are not ignorant of his [Satan's] devices." (2 Corinthians 2:11.) "We wrestle not against flesh and blood [merely], but against wicked spirits in high positions."--Ephesians 6:12.

"SEEK, KNOCK, ASK--AND RECEIVE"

In the concluding verses of the Study, Jesus admonished that the prayer should be with fervency or earnestness, and not merely lifeless, formal words. He gave the illustration of the man who at first refused to be disturbed, even by his friend, but was finally moved by the earnestness of his friend's petition. So when we pray for God's Kingdom to come and His will to be done, as it delays long, we are not to think that our prayers are unheeded. We are praying in harmony with the Divine promise, and although we are not hastening the Kingdom by our prayers we are entering into a blessing of rest through faith, by continually bringing before our minds these promises of God, and thus waiting upon the Lord for the fulfilment of His promise.

What God really wishes to give to His people is His Holy Spirit. Because of the imperfections of the flesh none of us can be filled with the Spirit at first, as was our perfect Master. But as we come to God desiring to be filled with His spirit, desiring to be in harmony with Him, desiring to be in His character-likeness, by the seeking

we find, and to our knocking the door is opened.

Nor should we be afraid that our Heavenly Father would give any bad answer to our requests. Would an earthly parent give to a hungry child a stone when it asked for bread; a serpent when it asked for fish; a scorpion when it asked for an egg? Surely not! We are to know that our Heavenly Father is much better than we, much kinder, much more just and loving, and that He delights to give His good gifts, His Holy Spirit, to those consecrated disciples of Jesus who earnestly seek it.

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"A little talk with Jesus--
How it smooths the rugged road!
How it seems to help me onward,
When I faint beneath my load!
When my heart is crushed with sorrow,
And my eyes with tears are dim,
There is naught can yield me comfort
Like a little talk with Him.

"The way is sometimes weary
To yonder nearing clime,
But a little talk with Jesus
Has helped me many a time.
The more I come to know Him,
And all His grace explore,
It sets me ever longing
To know Him more and more."

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PRINCE OF DARKNESS VS. PRINCE OF LIGHT

--FEBRUARY 8.--LUKE 11:14-26,33-36.--

"Look therefore whether the light that is
in thee be not darkness."--LUKE 11:35.

HOWEVER much the worldly-wise may scoff at the Bible teaching that there is a personal Devil, and that he is a prince over a demon host of spirit beings--rebels against God's government--let us always remember that this is the teaching of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. The difficulty with the worldly-wise is that their good reasoning faculties are not guided by the Word of God. They say it is difficult enough to believe in a God and an angelic host, His servants, spirit beings and invisible to men. Much more difficult is it--

yea, to them unreasonable--to believe in another spirit ruler and another spirit host, the adversaries of God. They reason that it would not be thinkable that God would create beings opposed to Himself; or that if, created holy, they became the adversaries of righteousness, an all-powerful Creator would not destroy them, but permit them to continue their evil opposition.

The Bible explains that Satan was the first transgressor,

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in that previously he was a cherub, an angel of superior rank and nature, who lost his loyalty to God through pride and ambition; and that he seduced into disobedience those whom the Bible now designates a demon host. Everywhere the Scriptures set forth that this host of spirit beings are associated with our earth, and not in some far-off fiery furnace torturing the human dead.

The Bible indicates that God does not lack the power to deal with these rebels, but that He is permitting them for a time, allowing them to manifest the fruitage of sin, anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife--as a lesson for angels and men. They are under certain limitations which the Apostle styles "chains of darkness." They have not been permitted to materialize as men since the Deluge. But they have sought intercourse with humanity; and in proportion to their success their victims are said to be obsessed by evil spirits. When the victory is complete, the victim is said to be possessed of a demon and insane.

It is estimated that fully one-half of those in insane asylums are demon-possessed--the demons belonging to the very class so frequently mentioned in connection with our Lord's ministry. As in the past, intercourse was sought through witches, wizards, necromancers, etc., so today, intercourse with humanity is sought through ouija boards, planchettes, and spirit mediums. Humanity, deceived by the doctrines of these demons inculcated in the Dark Ages (1 Timothy 4:1), has neglected God's testimony in the Bible to the effect that the dead are asleep, and "know not anything." (Ecclesiastes 9:5.) "Their thoughts perish," until their awakening in the morning of the New Dispensation, otherwise styled "the Day of Christ"--"the Times of Restitution"--the Millennial Day. (Philippians 1:10; Acts 3:21.) Today's Study introduces the Master delivering a man from demon possession. The people rightly understood what was the difficulty; but, being opposed to the Master, some of them evilly declared that the demons obeyed Jesus because He Himself was Satan, Beelzebub, the Prince of devils. Others said: Your miracles are all earthly; show us some sign from Heaven.

Jesus answered the accusation that He was the Prince of demons rather than the Prince of Light by showing that for Satan to cast out his own hosts would signify

a warfare in the camp of the evil ones, which would imply that Satan's house was divided and that it would soon fall. It would be foolish, therefore, for Satan to cast out Satan; consequently such an argument should have no weight. But, said Jesus, other Jews have exercised this same power of casting out devils, and you never charged these with being the Prince of demons. And how could there be several princes of demons? Judge according to this whether your argument against Me is good. But, on the contrary, to those of you who realize the truth that I am casting out demons by the "finger" of God, the power of God, there will be no doubt that this power, which I possess more than others, and which I have exercised through My Apostles also, is an evidence of special favor from God and a corroboration of My testimony that God's Kingdom is near you-- that the power of that Kingdom is being exercised in your midst.

But, as a matter of fact, when that nation rejected Christ, the Kingdom which God offered them was taken away from them. The offer was discontinued. They were turned aside for a time from God's favor, while the Message of Grace and Truth has since been gathering another Israel--drawing first of all from the Jews such as were Israelites indeed; and later, going hither and thither, it has gathered for this same class saintly ones out of every nation.

The power of Jesus in casting out demons showed that He was thoroughly competent to deal with the Prince of this world, the Prince of Darkness, Satan; and that, had the Kingdom been set up at that time, Satan and his angels would have been bound or restrained then. However, in view of the foreknown and foretold rejection of Jesus and the Kingdom, the work of binding Satan did not progress, but delayed until the Second Coming of Jesus. Then, His Bride class having meantime been selected to be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom, He will take His great power and reign. At that time He will deal with Satan and his subordinate demons; yea, with all that have cultivated sin and the spirit of Satan, which has so seriously gotten hold of humanity under the conditions of the fall.

THE BINDING OF SATAN

Our Lord tells that in the end of this Gospel Age Satan shall be bound for a thousand years (the thousand years of Messiah's glorious Reign), that he may deceive mankind no longer, as he has been deceiving and deluding them for six thousand years, putting darkness for light and misrepresenting the Heavenly Father as the worst being imaginable, plotting and predestinating thousands of millions to be born and to go to eternal torture.

Jesus pictures Satan's control of the world at the present time, likening him to a strong man armed and guarding his palace. He can maintain his control until

a stronger comes, overcomes him and takes possession of his wrongly-acquired valuables. Thus Jesus foretold that His own Messianic Kingdom will be stronger than that of Satan, and will control it and bind him. The result will be the deliverance of mankind from the curse of sin and death which has rested upon the race for now six great Days of a thousand years each. Messiah's Kingdom will be in the great Seventh Day, or Sabbath, in which all who will accept the Savior may enter into rest.

Meantime Jesus, according to the Father's Plan, during this Gospel Age, through His own Message and the Message of the Apostles, has been gathering out of the world a Bride class, to be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

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Satan is allowed considerable liberty in the testing of the loyalty of all these. There can be only the two masters. Knowingly or ignorantly, people are serving either the One or the other. As Jesus said, "He that is not with Me is against Me."

THE WHOLE WORLD OBSESSED

St. Paul declares that the Prince of this world (Satan) "now works in the hearts of the children of disobedience." Jesus took up this same thought, and likened the world to the poor demoniac whom He had released from Satan's grasp. Similarly, all who accept Christ are delivered from the power of Satan. Let not sin, therefore, have dominion in your mortal bodies. --Romans 6:12.

Jesus represents such hearts as swept and garnished --sins forgiven and grace of God received. But He declares that Satan will seek to regain control of such through the spirit of the world--pride, anger, malice, hatred, strife, works of the flesh and of the Devil. (Matthew 12:43-45.) "Whom resist, steadfast in the faith," writes the Apostle. (1 Peter 5:9.) If Satan be not resisted, the danger is that the light and the blessing received through the knowledge of God will become a curse and an injury; and that the result with such a person will be worse than before he came into relationship with Christ.

Jesus emphasized this, declaring that as a candle should not be put under a bushel and hidden, but should be exposed so as to do good, so also the light of the Truth, the grace of God received, must not be hidden, but must be let shine to the glory of God. Otherwise, the light would become extinguished and the darkness would prevail. The eye represents intelligence; and as long as we have the true enlightenment, or intelligence, the whole body is blessed thereby; but if the intelligence be destroyed, if the eye be blinded, the whole body will suffer and be in darkness.

Every one, therefore, receiving the light should take

heed to it as a precious thing lest he lose it, and have darkness instead. The eye, the light, here represents the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, which has the greatest power to bless us; and this, if lost, would mean to us even a greater darkness than that we experienced before coming to a knowledge of the Lord.

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NAMES WRITTEN IN THE LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE

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

THE invitation of this Gospel Age is to a special class, a class which professes to be out of harmony with present conditions--out of harmony with sin.

Those who may become of this class are such as have been granted a knowledge of God's arrangement through Christ, and these may avail themselves of this privilege without delay, if they choose, by making a consecration to the Lord.

As Jesus laid down His earthly life in the service of the Father and of the Truth, and was misunderstood by those about Him, so those who follow in Jesus' footsteps must in like manner suffer disappointments in earthly matters, if they would be sharers in His glory and immortality. As Jesus overcame and sat down with the Father in His Throne, so those who overcome will sit down with Jesus in His Throne.

We must distinguish between the overcoming of Jesus and that of His followers. His was a perfect overcoming. While He had the instruction of the Father and the help of the angels, He had no one as a sin-bearer, no one to impute any righteousness to Him. His overcoming was full and complete. His followers, being imperfect in the flesh, cannot do perfectly; and therefore by the grace of God it has been so arranged that these may be acceptable through Jesus, if they have the spirit to overcome, the desire to overcome--if they manifest righteousness of heart. But they must show this overcoming spirit, else they can never be associated with our Lord in His Kingdom. They must be copies of their Master in spirit, even though imperfect in the flesh.

Thus the very moment that we take the step of consecration and are accepted, all our blemishes and imperfections are covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness. But it is not only while we have blemishes that we need to be covered; even all those represented in the symbolic pictures of the Scriptures are there shown as

clothed. The pictures given of the Heavenly Father represent Him as clothed, and the pictures of our Lord represent Him as clothed. The Revelation pictures represent our Lord and the saints as clothed in white garments. The angels who appeared at the time of our Lord's resurrection are represented as clothed in white. Our Lord said: "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

The glorified Church is represented, not as taking off the robe of righteousness, but continuing to walk in white raiment. It will no longer be an imputed robe of righteousness, however; our righteousness will be our own. To be clothed in white garments then will be to be recognized as one of the pure ones--not as now, in a robe of reckoned righteousness, but in a robe of actual righteousness. "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."

TWO BOOKS OF LIFE

The Bible mentions two books of life--one appertaining to the present time, and the other to the Millennial Age. As we read: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life." Again, "And the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life." (Rev. 3:5; 20:12.) The special Book of Life that is open at this present time is the one in which the names of all the overcomers of this Gospel Age are written. When we take the step of consecration and are begotten of the Holy Spirit, it is appropriate that we should be reckoned as belonging to the family of God. Just as a family will keep a record of its members--Joseph, Mary, Martha, etc.--so with those who become members of the family of God, through Christ; their names will be recorded.

This recording has been going on throughout this present Age. This means that those whose names are therein written are not only members of the family of God, but also members of the Bride class. In order to maintain this position, they must be overcomers. In some Scriptures it seems that the Great Company class are included; in other passages it is not so. Those who will constitute the Little Flock, or those who will be of the Great Company, or those who will attain perfection as earthly beings by and by, must all be overcomers. The Bride class is referred to as "more than conquerors."

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They will gain the abundant entrance into the Heavenly Kingdom.--2 Peter 1:10,11.

In our text we may not be sure whether or not the Great Company is included. From one standpoint it looks as though they were; from another, as though they

may not be. We do well not to settle it too definitely in our minds, but wait to see what the Lord's intention is. We know that there will be some names blotted out. All those who go into the Second Death will be blotted out of the special record, and their names have no place in the Book of Life. Perhaps the Great Company class will also be blotted out of the special Record. But we are not anxious to put that construction upon it. They are our brethren, they also are brethren of the Lord, and we would like to think of them as favorably as possible.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FATHER

"I will confess his name." This gives us, first of all, the thought that, although we have been begotten of God, we have never been introduced to Him--in His actual presence. Our Lord is not only represented as our Bridegroom, but also as our Elder Brother, and is pictured as waiting on the other side until we, His brethren, shall pass over. And as we shall pass over, Our Lord being the One to whom the Father delegated the work of instructing us in the School of Christ, it will be appropriate that He should introduce us to the Father.

In another place, our Lord says that if we are ashamed of Him, He will be ashamed of us. This expression would rather imply that the Great Company class would not be included here. But we are sure respecting the Little Flock class, that they will be introduced to the Father and to the holy angels as the Bride of Christ. This is pictured in the 45th Psalm: "She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework; the virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto Thee." Those especially confessed, introduced, are the Bride class only. And we are to hope and strive that we may have a place amongst these. The place that the Father would prefer us to have is the place we would prefer to have.

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THANKSGIVING WITH PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION

The following Scriptures have been compiled by Brother Daniel Toole:

TAKE TIME TO PRAY.

For my love they are my adversaries; but I give myself unto prayer.--Psalm 109:4.

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.--Acts 6:4.

He went out into a mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God.--Luke 6:12.

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in Heaven

and thou upon earth.--Eccl. 5:2.

PRAY IN SECRET.

Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.--Matt. 6:6.

And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the even was come He was there alone.--Matt. 14:23.

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PRAY IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.--James 4:8.

Have faith in God. What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them.--Mark 11:22,24.

O, Lord God of our Fathers, art not Thou God in Heaven? and rulest not Thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in Thine hand is there not power and might so that none is able to withstand Thee?--2 Chron. 20:6.

AS A CHILD OF A FATHER.

If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?--Luke 11:11-13.

ANSWER CERTAIN.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.--Matt. 7:7,8.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.--James 1:5.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.--John 14:13.

PRAY HAVING FAITH IN GOD.

And Jesus answering saith unto them, "Have faith in God."--Mark 11:22.

And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know

that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.--
1 John 5:14,15.

And they were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them; for they cried to God in the battle and He was entreated of them because they put their trust in Him.--1 Chron. 5:20.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.--1 John 3:21,22.

Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.--Heb. 10:19,20.

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.--James 1:6,7.

Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them.--Mark 11:24.

PRAY BEING FREE FROM CONDEMNATION.

Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord. Thou hast covered Thyself with a cloud that our prayer should not pass through.--Lam. 3:40,44.

Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul. I cried unto Him with my mouth, and He was extolled with my tongue. If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me.--
Psalm 66:16-18.

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.--1 Peter 3:7.

For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God, and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.--1 John 3:20-22.

WITH THE WHOLE HEART.

I cried with my whole heart, hear me, O Lord; I will keep Thy statutes.--Psalm 119:145.

Thou hast given him his heart's desire and hast not withholden the request of his lips.--Psalm 21:2.

TRUSTING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS.

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for He is faithful that promised.--Heb. 10:23.

Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them

that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations.--Deut. 7:9.

For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him....God is not a man that He should lie; neither the son of man that He should repent; hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?--Num. 23:9,19.

Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past

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age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.--Heb. 11:11.

Their children also multipliedst Thou as the stars of Heaven, and broughtest them into the land, concerning which Thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess it.--Neh. 9:23.

PRAY TRUSTING GOD'S POWER.

Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.--Gen. 18:14.

Ah, Lord God, behold Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee.--Jer. 32:17.

For with God nothing shall be impossible.--Luke 1:37.

And Asa cried unto the Lord his God and said, Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help whether with many or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, Thou art our God; let not man prevail against Thee.--2 Chron. 14:11.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.--Eph. 3:20.

TRUSTING IN GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.--Psalm 51:1.

O my God, incline Thine ear and hear; open Thine eyes and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy name; for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies.--Dan. 9:18.

Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will He teach sinners in the way....Remember, O Lord, Thy tender mercies and Thy loving-kindnesses, for they have been ever of old.--Psalm 25:8,6.

Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant; save me for Thy mercies' sake.--Psalm 31:16.

Let, I pray Thee, Thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to Thy word unto Thy servant.--

Psalm 119:76.

And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform.-- Romans 4:19-21.

PRAY PLEADING OUR NEED.

Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help.--Psalm 22:11.

Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low; deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.-- Psalm 142:6.

For he shall deliver the needy when He crieth; the poor, also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their souls from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in His sight.--Psalm 72:12-14.

Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from Him cometh my salvation....He only is my Rock and my Salvation; He is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved....My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him.--Psalm 62:1,2,5.

PRAY PLEADING GOD'S GLORY.

And Moses said unto the Lord, "Then the Egyptians shall hear it (for Thou broughtest up this people in Thy might from among them); and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land; for they have heard that Thou, Lord, art among this people, that Thou, Lord, art seen face to face, and that Thy cloud standeth over them, and that Thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night. Now if Thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of Thee will speak, saying, Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore He hath slain them in the wilderness."-- Num. 14:13-16.

O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth; and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?--Joshua 7:8,9.

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice that Elijah the Prophet came near and said: Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, let it be

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known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant and that I have done all these things at Thy word....Hear me, O Lord, hear me; that these people

may know that Thou art the Lord God and that Thou hast turned their heart back again.--1 Kings 18:36,37.

For Thou art my Rock and my Fortress! Therefore for Thy name's sake lead me and guide me.--Psalm 31:3.

Now, therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and his supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline Thine ear and hear; open Thine eyes and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy name; for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God; for Thy people and Thy city are called by Thy name.--Dan. 9:17-19.

PRAY PLEADING GOD'S JUSTICE.

That be far from Thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from Thee; shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?--Gen. 18:25.

In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Thy righteousness.--Psalm 31:1.

PRAY PLEADING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

I beseech Thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.--2 Kings 20:3.

Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.--Neh. 5:19.

And before this, Eliashib the priest, having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God, was allied unto Tobiah.--Neh. 13:4.

PRAY PERSEVERINGLY.

And He said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your

Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?--Luke 11:5-13.

And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man; and there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not, for awhile; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?--Luke 18:1-8.

I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a New Song into my mouth, even praise unto our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.--Psalm 40:1-3.

And Jacob said, O God of my Father Abraham, and God of my Father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee; I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which Thou hast shown unto Thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray Thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother

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with the children. And Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.--Gen. 32:9-12.

And it came to pass when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah, his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and behold, he stood by the camels at the well.--Gen. 24:30.

He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God; yea he had power over the angel and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto Him: he found Him in Bethel, and there He spake with us; even the Lord God of Hosts: the Lord is his memorial, therefore turn thou to thy God; keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.--Hosea 12:3-6.

PRAY WITH PURE MOTIVES.

Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.--James 4:3.

PRAY WITH THANKSGIVING.

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.
--Col. 4:2.

Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.--Phil. 4:6.

By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.--Heb. 13:15.

I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.--Psalm 116:17.

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.--Psalm 69:30,31.

STIR YOURSELF TO IT.

And there is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee; for Thou hast hid Thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.--Isa. 64:7.

Or let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.--Isa. 27:5.

Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.--2 Tim. 1:6.

LET YOUR FAITH GROW STRONG BY MEDITATION UPON THE PROMISES.

The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation, chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved. Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing; He maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown; yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth; and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble. To whom, then, would ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard,

that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.--Isa. 40:19-31.

And call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.--Psalm 50:15.

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.--Psalm 34:15-17.

For Thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee.--Psalm 86:5.

The Lord is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His works.--Psalm 145:17.

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him.--Romans 10:12.

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If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.--James 1:5.

Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.--Heb. 4:16.

And I say unto you, Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.--Luke 11:9,10.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.--John 14:13.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.--John 16:24.

ENCOURAGED AND INSTRUCTED BY PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS.

Moses for help to judge Israel.--Num. 11:11-15.

Moses for Israel's forgiveness.--Exod. 32:11-13.

Moses for Miriam.--Num. 12:13.

Moses for murmurers.--Num. 14:13-19.

Moses for Pharaoh.--Exod. 8:12,13,30,31; 9:33.

Moses in the case of fiery serpents.--Num. 21:7,8.

Moses for Aaron.--Deut. 9:20.

Samuel for Israel.--1 Sam. 7:5-10.

Elijah for the widow's son.--1 Kings 17:20-23.

Hezekiah against the king of Assyria.--2 Kings 19:15-20;32-37.

Hannah for a son.--1 Sam. 1:9-11,27.

Abraham's prayer.--Gen. 18:23-33; 20:17.

Lot's prayer.--Gen. 19:17-22,29.
 Isaac's prayer.--Gen. 25:21.
 Jehoahaz for Israel.--2 Kings 13:4,5.
 Asa's prayer.--2 Chron. 14:11,12.
 Jehoshaphat's prayer.--2 Chron. 20:1-24,26.
 Manasseh's prayer.--2 Chron. 33:10-13.
 Job for his friends.--Job 42:7-10.
 Ezra's prayer.--Ezra 8:21-23,31. Chaps. 9; 10:1-19.
 Nehemiah's prayer.--Neh. Chaps. 1; 2:1-8.
 David's.--Psalm 18:6; 28:6,7; 31:22; 34:1-10; 118:5; 116:1,2; 138:3.
 Paul and Silas.--Acts 16:25,26.
 Manoah's prayer.--Judges 13:8,9.
 See Psalms 62:1-5; 145:15; James 1:17.
 Prayer a necessity.--Luke 21:36; 1 Peter 4:7; Eph. 6:18.
 "Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding."--2 Tim. 2:7.
 "When prayer delights thee least,
 Then learn to say,
 Now is the greatest need
 That I should pray." --See Romans 10:12.

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SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

WATCHING LEST HE SHOULD SEEM TO COME SHORT

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Greetings in the name of our precious Redeemer! During the weeks that have intervened since leaving Bethel en route for the South, it has been on my mind to write you; and I have refrained from so doing merely because I know that your time is so thoroughly occupied in the Master's service. However, I want to say that the Truth is becoming more precious; and that my appreciation of spiritual things is daily increasing and I am rejoicing in the many, many evidences of the Lord's love and care.

The last few TOWERS have been so grand and truly a spiritual feast; especially those articles re the time features of the Divine Plan. While I have full confidence in the chronological features of the Plan, yet nevertheless my consecration is unto death and forever; and I am trying to live each day as if it were my last, and then there is just ONE DAY between me and the Kingdom.

My heart has been grieved, as I have come in contact with the dear brethren in different parts of the country, to note in many the tendency to complain and to find fault on the slightest pretext. I feel we are drawing very near a time of testing

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for the Church. Surely if we have a deep heart appreciation of the Truth, we would not be so prone to find fault and to criticize. Personally, the Truth is so precious and so all-absorbing that I feel less inclined to murmur, and more and

more inclined to be thankful for every experience in life, be it pleasant or unpleasant. The resolution not to murmur or complain has been so helpful, for which I thank the Lord.

Every day sees fresh cause for thankfulness for "The Vow." As I see the wave of immorality and debauchery which is sweeping the country, and the generally prevailing tendency to lower the standards of morals and propriety, I am sure the Lord has given us the Vow for our protection. Some of the dear friends seem to think they are strong enough without the Vow, and perhaps they are; but for my part I am glad for any protection and help which will enable me to stand more firmly.

Another thing that comes under my observation is this: Some of the friends seem inclined to be rather lax or careless in their deportment, with the excuse that their motives are pure and that they mean no harm; and it seems to anger them if their actions are called in question. Sometimes I wonder how many of those who profess to be in Present Truth will be "overcomers." The standard is so high and we have so much to fight against! Many seem to be lacking in a deep spiritual appreciation of the Truth. I cannot judge the motives of the dear friends; and therefore I am trying by the Lord's grace to walk more circumspectly and watch myself closely lest I would even "seem to come short."

Oh, that prize is so wonderful, so glorious, and the Kingdom so near, "what manner of people ought we to be in all holy conduct"! Praise the Lord, we are almost home! The lights of the Eternal City are almost discernible, and soon we shall be at Home and at Rest!

In conclusion, dear Brother, let me assure you of my hearty co-operation in the promulgation of the Harvest Message, with which I am in perfect harmony. I hope, if it should be the Lord's will, to see you some time this winter. In the meantime, I hope and pray the Father's smile of approval will continue to be your daily portion. Pray for me, as I do for you and all the family.

The classes throughout the South send their love and greetings. With much Christian love, I am

Your Brother, by His Grace, J. P. MACPHERSON.

"CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE"

DEAR BRETHREN:--

Although our Heavenly Father sees fit to try the faith of His people along various lines, yet it seems that during the coming year we may meet a more severe testing of our confidence in God and His Word.

I am aware, however, that the faith of the dear brethren and sisters is very strong, and believe they will continue to fight the good fight of faith successfully to the end.

Pastor Russell, as I have always understood him, never claimed his interpretation of the time prophecies to be infallible. His writings have always impressed me that way.

Should the year 1915 come and not witness all that many

of the brethren expect, it will matter but little to me. We know still that "Thy Word is Truth," and that not one jot or tittle will pass till all be fulfilled. We know further that, according to the signs of the times, the Day is not far distant.

When fiery trials assail us, let us remember the words of inspiration, "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

Yours in faith and hope, N. E. BUTLER, N.S.

WITHOUT HIS CONSENT

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

A copy of 1913 "Convention Report" has just come to my attention. It contains what purports to be a report of a discourse delivered by me at the Springfield Convention.

I have not the disposition nor the power to control the actions of others in the publication of what I say at Conventions; but I would like to have the friends know that such publication is without my consent. A stenographic report of the above mentioned discourse was handed me at Springfield, but I declined to read it, not wishing to have anything to do with its publication.

Yours in His service, J. F. RUTHERFORD.

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BEREAN QUESTIONS IN SCRIPTURE STUDIES

FEBRUARY 1

Read p. 715, par. 1, to p. 719, par. 1.

(35) What will be the special advantage in the awakened ones being able to remember their past experiences? P. 715, par. 1.

(36) How will these experiences and the lessons of the Millennial Age benefit mankind? And what is the relation between their judgment and the present trying experiences of the Church class? P. 715, par. 2.

(37) Into what classes does the Prophet Daniel divide the awakened ones? P. 716, par. 1.

(38) How does the Prophet's declaration support our position that the world will not be awakened to instantaneous perfection? P. 716, par. 2.

(39) Explain how Nero may be used as an illustration of those who will "come forth to shame and lasting contempt." P. 716, par. 3, to P. 718.

PUNISHMENTS FOR SINS OF THIS LIFE

(40) Will mankind be punished in the Millennial Age for the sins of this life? If so, for what kind of sins? P. 718,

par. 2; P. 719, par. 1.

FEBRUARY 8

Read p. 719, par. 2, to p. 722, par. 2.

(41) Explain the meaning of the statement, "Some men's sins go before to judgment, and some they follow after," using Nero as an illustration. P. 719, par. 2; P. 720, par. 1.

"THUS IS THE (CHIEF) RESURRECTION OF THE (SPECIAL) DEAD."
(1 COR. 15:42.)

(42) Why is the resurrection of the Church designated "the First Resurrection"? And what two other classes will experience an instantaneous resurrection to perfect life? And what is the meaning of the statement, "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished"? (Rev. 20:5.) P. 720, par. 2.

(43) What are some of the characteristics of the First Resurrection--with what bodies and powers will the New Creation come forth? P. 721, par. 1, 2.

(44) How does the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 15, guard against the thought that all mankind shall eventually bear the image of the Heavenly Father? P. 722, par. 1.

(45) What does the Apostle declare respecting "flesh and blood" inheriting the Kingdom? P. 722, par. 2.

FEBRUARY 15

Read p. 723, par. 1, to p. 726, par. 1.

(46) Is it difficult to fully grasp the thought of this complete change from fleshly to spiritual conditions? And how has the Apostle anticipated this difficulty in 1 Cor. 15:51,52? P. 723, par. 1.

(47) Why has so plain a statement been so generally misunderstood? P. 723, par. 2.

(48) What will be the experience of the Lord's people who remain until His Second Advent--will they not die? Quote Scriptures to support position taken. P. 724, par. 1, 2.

"IT DOTHT NOT YET APPEAR WHAT WE SHALL BE"

(49) While all the perfected New Creatures will have the same kind of glory, will they all enjoy the same degree of glory? P. 725, par. 1.

(50) How has the Lord indicated these differences in two of His parables? P. 725, par. 2.

(51) Judging from the different degrees of nearness to the Lord among His Apostles, would it not be reasonable to expect various positions of power, honor and closeness of relationship to Him in the Kingdom? P. 726, par. 1.

FEBRUARY 22

Read p. 726, par. 2, to p. 728, par. 3.

(52) In the Apostle's description of the First Resurrection in 1 Cor. 15:42-44, to what does "It" refer? P. 726, par. 2.

(53) What is the nature of the spiritual body in which "It" shall be raised? P. 727, par. 1, 2.

(54) Why is the statement, "It is sown in dishonor," specially applicable to the New Creation in the trial state? P. 727, par. 3.

(55) What is the significance of the statement, "It is sown in weakness"? P. 728, par. 1.

(56) Explain, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." P. 728, par. 2.

(57) If the very thought of the future glory lifts us above our earthly cares and sorrows, what must the realities mean, and how should we strive to be overcomers and so receive an abundant entrance into the Kingdom? P. 728, par. 3.

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A PROPHECY NEARING FULFILMENT

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."--HAB. 3:17,18.

HABAKKUK'S entire prayer, recorded in this chapter of his prophecy, is so symbolical that it would be scarcely in keeping with it for us to give the words of our text the plain, simple interpretation that we would be otherwise inclined to give. This simple interpretation would be that although the conditions were such that famine stalked everywhere, and there was nothing of earthly hope, nevertheless God's people at any time and in any place would rejoice in God and give Him the glory.

It would seem very strange, however, if the Prophet should wind up the whole chapter, so highly symbolical, with anything so plain and literal as we have suggested. With so much imagery in his mind, it would seem but reasonable that the words should be interpreted in keeping with their context, and that we should regard it as the Prophet's expression of some deep truths. Much of the language of the Bible is figurative; and in our common conversation we also use many figures. For instance, in the Scriptures a vine is a figure used for the Church: As our Lord said, "I am the Vine; ye are the branches."--John 15:5.

The flock of God--the sheep--are common figurative expressions for the same class. Our Lord speaks of the Little Flock. We are His sheep. The Jews were also referred to as God's sheep, by the Psalmist David, in Psalm 74:1; 79:13, etc.

So with the word olive. The olive tree is mentioned by St. Paul in referring to the special people of God, His peculiar people--those in relationship with Him. He speaks of the natural olive tree--shows that the Promise

applied originally to the Jewish nation: "In thee [Abraham] and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." He says that because of unbelief the natural branches were broken off. Thus we locate the vine and the olive both as representing the Church of Christ, from different points of view.

When the Little Flock shall have passed beyond the veil, there will still be the Great Company of the Lord's people left here. Many of these will apparently continue in Babylon until the time of trouble shall cause Babylon to fall. And by the fall of Babylon these will be set free. Before all this is made plain to them, they may use the language of our text, and later come to see clearly. In the 19th of Revelation this company are spoken of as rejoicing in the fall of Babylon and saying, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him; for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Wife hath made Herself ready." (Vs.7.) All things had seemed to them to be failures; and now they see that God's Plan has not failed, but has been fulfilled.

EARTHLY GOVERNMENTS A FAILURE

The Church has not yet blessed the world. The fruit of the Vine will feed the world in the coming Age. Neither the olive nor the vine will give life to the world at the present time. This will come in the New Dispensation, during the Messianic reign.

The Lord has used the word field to represent the world: "The field is the world." The world have been hoping to better their affairs. They have been hoping to manage matters successfully. And so the various universal empires have sprung up. First the Babylonians tried to give the world a better government, but their efforts were of no avail. Then the Medes and Persians tried, and also failed. Next the Greeks and later the Romans took the reins of universal government, and likewise failed. Finally Papacy came forward, claiming to be the Kingdom of Christ that would rule the world. She failed. Of late years Socialism has come to the front, saying that it can better the world, but the prospects for social improvement are no better.

"NO HERD IN THE STALLS"

The expression, "herd in the stalls," seems a little obscure. The Scriptures liken our Lord Jesus to a bullock--and in the coming Age mankind, on reaching perfection, will be symbolically represented by a bullock. The suggestion of the Prophet David is that mankind then shall offer bullocks on God's altar. (Psa. 51:19.) This cannot refer to the Church in the present time; for in the Atonement Day type the Church is represented by a goat, and our Lord--a perfect Man when His sacrifice was made--is represented by a bullock. But in the end of the next Age, when the world shall be perfected, they

shall offer bullocks on the altar. This represents how mankind will make a full consecration of themselves, their perfect powers.

We know nothing better in the application of the bullock than that suggested by the Psalmist. At the close of this Gospel Age, when all the Church shall have passed beyond the veil, there will be no perfect men. In

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other words, there will be a point of time when the Church will be glorified and when the Ancient Worthies will not yet have appeared. The people will stand amazed, not seeing any way out of their troubles. Only those who have the light of the Lord's Word will be able to appreciate the condition at all.

Those who will then understand--the Great Company--will rejoice in the Lord. They will be able to trust in God, even though conditions in the world are distressing, and the Ancient Worthies not yet here to take hold of matters. They will see that the conditions are really leading up to the great blessing--that the great Time of Trouble is the necessary preparation for blessing. And they will say, Let us rejoice and give glory to the Lord, for the Bride hath made herself ready! We see in this glorification of the Church the beginning of the great blessing. Soon we may expect to see the Ancient Worthies here. Then will come the fulfilment of all God's gracious promises. So we will not lose heart, but will trust in the Lord.

Our Lord Jesus spoke of the Great Company--the foolish virgin class--in His Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 7:21-23.) After the last member of the Little Flock has gone beyond the veil, the Great Company will be thoroughly awakened and will say, "Lord, Lord, may we not come in? We are ready now, dear Lord; we see where we have made our mistake. We see matters differently; we realize what privileges and opportunities for sacrifice we once enjoyed, but missed. May we not enter even now?" But the Lord will answer, "Depart from Me. I do not recognize you." This word depart does not mean that they will depart into eternal torment, as we once thought. The Lord does not say, "Depart, ye cursed," for cursed means to be set apart for punishment. He merely says, "Depart from Me."

The Kingdom of Heaven is elsewhere (Matt. 25:1-12) likened unto ten virgins who took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. Five of them were wise and took oil in their vessels with their lamps; but five were foolish virgins and took no oil with them. When the Bridegroom came, the foolish virgins said to the wise ones, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." But they could not do so, they had enough only for their own lamps. After the wise virgins had entered with the Bridegroom, the door was shut. Then came the other virgins saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto

us!" But he answered, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

These words of our Lord, "I know you not," do not mean that these were not virgins. What do they mean? He means that, having recognized His Bride, He does not know any other woman. These were desiring to be recognized as a part of the Bride. And the Lord says, I do not recognize you. My Bride is complete. So the foolish virgin class are rejected from a place in the Bride class, but they are received as associates and assistants. Their rejection will give them cause for grief. Realizing that the door of opportunity is closed to them, they will cry, Oh, we have lost the great prize! They may become despondent. We do not know.

SORROW TURNED INTO JOY

But this Great Company are afterward pictured as saying, Let us be glad! Let us rejoice! Let us glorify God, because the Bride has been taken! Should any one say to them, But you are not of the Bride class, their reply might be: Nevertheless, the blessings are coming to all--even to us! The Bride class are the First-fruits of God's people. It is our own fault that we failed to get into the Bride class. If we had seen a while ago as we now see, we would have striven harder and we should not have failed. We would not have listened to what Babylon had to say, We would have "run with patience the race set before us." We were stupefied by the "doctrines of demons." (1 Timothy 4:1.) We are glad that we are now awakened. We rejoice that God's Plan is being so gloriously outworked. Our lamps are burning now. We are blessed as never before. Let us be glad and rejoice in that the Bride is glorified.

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"CUT OFF FROM THE FOLD"

"The flock shall be cut off from the fold." As applied to the elect Church, this is viewed from the earthly standpoint. There is an earthly fold and a Heavenly fold. We are now in the fold on earth. We must die in order to enter into the glory that is promised us--to enter into the Heavenly fold.

Our Lord Jesus was cut off from the earthly fold when He died. And as with our Lord, so with us. We must be cut off from the fold here before we can enter into the fold above. It may appear to the Great Company for a time as though all things are failing, and not coming to pass; but from God's standpoint the fig tree will be budding and the olive will be bringing forth her fruit. There will be no miscarriage of God's purposes. The Church will reach her full glorification, and then the vine will bear glorious, ripe fruitage for all mankind.

PASTORAL ADVICE ON PRAYER AND TESTIMONY

THE New Creation needs a special meeting of a devotional kind once a week for prayer and testimony. We believe that the friends would find it very profitable to set aside at least one night in the quarter as a prayer meeting in a very general sense. Our suggestion has been that the middle Wednesday evening of the quarter be the one selected for this purpose. This meeting should be devoted to prayer rather than to testimony. It may be opened with a prayer by the leader, who could then call for two or three prayers. Afterward he might read the text for the week, and comment upon it for about three minutes; or if the Class were very small, comment about five minutes; if very large in numbers, about two minutes. The length of the comment would be according to the size of the Class.

Then the leader might say, This is the evening we have arranged to be especially for a prayer service. We have all found, no doubt, that it is a special privilege for the Christian to worship the Lord, to offer prayer, praise. With the heart, we believe; with the mouth, we confess. During this service we prefer not to call by name, but desire that all present participate. If you have only a few words, no matter. Indeed, we would rather encourage the thought that the prayer should not be too long. Now we will give opportunity for three to rise-- two brothers and one sister; after that we will have a hymn; following the hymn we will have another opportunity for prayer--one brother and one sister (according to the general make-up of the class), and thus give an opportunity all around.

We find that a great blessing comes to the Lord's people from the exercise of the privilege of prayer. They need to be encouraged, for many of them have not had such encouragement in their earlier life experiences.

We think that once a quarter for the special prayer service would serve the purpose better than once a month. More than once a quarter might prove tedious; and if such order has been followed in any Class, we recommend that it be changed.

A MODEL TESTIMONY MEETING

As a rule the mid-week meeting should be set aside for praise and testimony. As before stated, the Christian needs a special devotional meeting, with opportunities

for relating his experiences. Up-to-date testimonies are very helpful. All the Lord's people have trials and difficulties, and by hearing of one another's experiences, we learn to sympathize with each other.

Such meetings should begin with a hymn or two, followed by one or more short prayers. The brother who is to open the meeting with prayer, should be instructed before the meeting what to do and what not to do. And the opening prayer should be merely a request for Divine blessing upon the hearts and the minds of those assembled, that they might be in the right condition to receive the Lord's blessing.

Suppose that the text for the evening read, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time." The leader would say something like this: Our text for the week reads thus (here read the text)...Apparently, in God's sight the quality of humility is one of the most important qualities for any one of His people to possess. The entire Scriptures seem to indicate that when we have humility we are pleasing in God's sight; and that unless we have this quality we could never be fit for the Kingdom. We can see the wisdom of this requirement, too; for if God should exalt to a high position those who are not humble, it might lead to further difficulty in Heaven.

We can see that Satan was not properly submissive to God. After he had gotten into this proud condition he probably thought that he could do better than God; and in his endeavor to show what he could do, he brought his own downfall and brought the human family into sin and death. No wonder, then, that God required Jesus to show that He had submitted Himself to the Father's will. We see the course of Jesus in this matter, and how the Father afterwards exalted Him. It is for us to submit ourselves to everything which God's providence brings to us. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."

Now, dear friends, perhaps you may have something to tell us of your experiences this week, along the line of humility, or its opposite--pride. This is not to be a dissertation on Scripture. We already know what the text means. We want you to tell us of your own personal experiences. What experiences have you had that have tended to impress this Scripture on your mind? Let us have some little page from your personal experience. We will begin with Brother A, and then have Sister B, and then will alternate between the two sides of the room, and thus progress. Will you give us your testimony, Brother?

HOW TO GET DOUBLE EFFECT

By following the method of calling upon one here, and one there, we get double effect. If the testimony begins at one end, some who are far away might think: Oh, it will not come my turn for a long time! But if

the method is adopted of calling one here, and then one there, and there and here, it makes all more alert, and will keep them awake to the whole subject.

In leading a testimony meeting ourself, we keep the thought in mind that we want a good testimony to begin with and a good testimony to close with. So we start with some one who will give a good, wide-awake testimony, and thus give a good impetus at the beginning. When we are singing the opening hymn, we have in mind Brother So-and-so, or Sister So-and-so, to begin with or to end with. And thus we are sure of having a good beginning and a good ending.

If in the middle of the service there are some who seem to stumble a little, and do not seem to know how to proceed, we say, We understand, then, brother (or sister) that your experience has been thus and so. We would take what we surmise to be his real thought, and state it for him, if we think he is unable to complete it. We should be able to do this. Any leader ought to be able to do so, and thus kindly to encourage him.

We would be careful not to make it so rankly different from the thought that the brother or sister will feel like saying, Oh, that is not it at all! But we try to give his thought so that he could say, Brother Russell understands my thought! But if we should look sour and say nothing, the brother (or the sister more especially) might feel too much discouraged to try at all the next time, thinking that she might better keep quiet.

In a testimony meeting, where there are sixty to one hundred present in the Class, there is not the best opportunity for the most helpful meeting. The most profitable number would seem to be twelve to fifteen. Then there is sufficient variety, and none too much time to spare, yet enough time for all to testify.

If the first who testifies has a wrong thought or course of action, he may say: This week I had a conversation with a preacher who thinks that he knows a great deal about Scripture--I asked him several questions, which he could not answer; and all the people could see that he could not answer at all!

The leader might say to him, Brother, I have no doubt that you meant that well, but I am not so sure that you did it wisely. It might have been better if you had done it gently. We are not to be rude, but gentle, in meekness instructing those who oppose. You must remember that it would be a very difficult matter for a man of years, of standing, of education and reputation to see these things. You should, therefore, be doubly on guard not to arouse antagonism. So I would advise that in a case like that, we would simply drop a little word, and this word would be more in harmony with the suggestions of gentleness, meekness. In speaking as you did, that minister might have thought that you were not humble enough.

There might be another one who would have the thought all twisted in another way. The art of testifying well is one that the leaders of testimony meetings should

cultivate in the class. They should have right ideas about these matters, so that the Class would get proper thoughts as to how to deal with what comes up. In this way they have something fixed in their minds.

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TESTIMONY MEETING NOT FOR A DISCOURSE

If one attempts to give a sermon, the leader might say, Excuse me, Brother, but this is not a meeting for a discourse. This is a testimony meeting. Perhaps at some other time you can speak more at length.

It might be well for the leader to give in advance a definition of what a testimony is, something as follows: Presumably we all know what a testimony is. It is not a discourse or a dissertation on Scripture. This is a meeting especially for testimonies. I will give a dissertation myself on the text for the evening, now, at the beginning; but later we will wish to have the personal experiences of the friends.

We take it for granted that all the friends mean well; anything that is not just in order is not seen by them to

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be out of order. But by the leader's remarking that he would read the text and give a few words regarding its signification, and would then hear testimonies, they will see what is expected. By the leader's giving his own personal testimony at the close of the meeting, they will also get the proper thought.

Our thought is that it would not be best for the friends to depart for their homes with any unseemly haste, but to tarry for a word of greeting. That is our custom. We do not know any Scripture bearing directly upon this subject, and we would have no right to lay down a rule or law; we merely give the suggestion that nothing would be gained by entering into too much conversation at the close of the service. There is a danger of the after-meeting crowding out the benefits and blessings of the service. Of course, if they leave promptly the friends have not so much opportunity for fellowship, unless they come a little earlier--a little ahead of time--to the place of meeting. If some can do this it would not be amiss for them to have a little friendly interchange before the coming of the leader, and before the hour for meeting. This would seem to be a very profitable opportunity.

PROPER ATTITUDE IN PRAYER

Nothing in the Scriptures limits the Christian as to the attitude of his body when he goes to the Lord in prayer. Standing and kneeling are both mentioned. One would have to be guided by the spirit of a sound mind. If he were out on the street, it would surely be undesirable

to kneel. If he were on a stone floor, it might also be undesirable to kneel. If he were in private, it would seem best to kneel in prayer. Some have told us, however, that when they get upon their knees they are likely to get very sleepy. We would wish to be in that attitude which would enable us best to think of what we are doing. If we found that on our knees we were apt to grow sleepy, we would assume some other attitude which would keep us awake and attentive to prayer.

As for congregational prayer, it is our thought that it can generally be best observed sitting, with the head bowed. Of course, the preference of attitude is largely a matter of education, of habit. It has been our thought to say to the friends everywhere, that in public service this attitude would best be observed during prayer. Where the gathering is small and there is a carpet on the floor, it might be as well to kneel.

As for testimony meetings, it is our opinion that unless the class be a large one, it is better that they sit when testifying; for by remaining seated the giving of a testimony is easier. A difficulty with some in giving a testimony is that they rise and, becoming embarrassed, forget what they are going to say. So it reduces the nervous excitement of some to remain sitting. In a large meeting, it would be better for the person to stand, so that the voice can reach all.

STANDING DURING CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

In the matter of singing, we believe that the custom of standing, which prevails in Great Britain, is a very good one. It would seem to be too much to stand during a praise service, where a number of songs follow each other. But standing in singing has its advantages generally. A person in standing is putting himself in a distinctive attitude; and he can sing better because of thus putting his vocal chords in better position. It is desirable, therefore, when a hymn is announced, that the friends stand.

The invitation to rise should always be given in an appropriate way and not in a peremptory manner. The leader should not say, The congregation will rise, but, Let us rise and sing. There might be some who are in such physical condition that they would better remain sitting; hence the invitation, Let us rise and sing, is particularly intended for those who wish to rise. We think it would be a great mistake to say, Let us rise and sing, and then add--as some do--Let us remain standing while Brother A offers prayer. This might in many cases be imposing a real hardship.

TOO MUCH SELF-CONCEIT

But in the closing hymn, if the audience rise, then instead of having them sit down for the closing prayer, it would be well to remain standing, and the prayer should

be merely in the form of a benediction, which should not be distressing in length to anybody. If there had been one prayer before, there would not be further necessity for more than could be offered in a few words. Most prayers are too long.

One who is leading in prayer should not interfere with the liberties and rights of the entire congregation by the length of his petitions. We do not read that our Lord made very long prayers. It is true that He sometimes continued all night in prayer, alone; but He offered no lengthy prayers in public. The "Lord's Prayer" is quite brief and to the point. Those people who think they should tell the Lord all about how He should run the Universe, have too much self-concern, too much self-conceit. When we learn how poorly we are able to run ourselves, it should make us very slow to advise the Almighty as to how to manage His affairs.

FORMAL PRAYER OFTEN MOCKERY

A Boston newspaper, in referring to a prayer offered by a prominent minister, stated the next day that Rev. _____ delivered the most eloquent prayer ever offered to a Boston audience! The Editor evidently knew that the prayer was not addressed to the Lord! We need to have much of the spirit of a sound mind. We presume the Lord sees that all our intentions are good. But He has not told us that we are to pray to be heard of men. We are to pray to the Lord.

In private prayer we are told to "enter into thy closet," and we suppose that no one should pray in a tone that could be heard outside the door. Prayer, either in private or in public, is to be addressed to the Almighty, in reverent terms, and should express the desire of the heart appropriate to the occasion. We should know for what we are going to the Lord. It would be better that we should not go to the Throne of Grace unless we have something that we wish to say.

At the close of any meeting we think it would be very unwise for the speaker to pray for ten or fifteen minutes, or even five minutes. Two or three minutes would be an abundance, we think. The Lord knows about all our needs, and we should have consideration for the congregation.

It is something of a matter to sit for an hour, and then to prolong the service by a lengthy prayer is unwise. Lengthy prayers should be offered in private. Some Christians, however, need to be encouraged along the line of prayer--some are not disposed to pray as much as they should. Prayer is a most wonderful privilege, but one that should not be abused by endless repetition of the same thoughts.

"We will watch while we pray,

With our lamps trimmed and burning;
We will work while we wait,
Till the Master's returning;
We will sing and rejoice,
While each omen discerning."

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FAITHFULNESS IN OUR STEWARDSHIP

"It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."--1 COR. 4:2.

EVERY great business enterprise employs various classes of workers. This does not imply that the firm approves of all the moral qualities of their employees. They may employ some laboring men who are of good moral character and some who are of poor character; for they do not hold the working men responsible in that sense. But the most responsible positions are given to those of recognized good character.

So God makes use of different agencies to do His service. These are sometimes animate, sometimes inanimate. (Isaiah 45:1-4; Jer. 10:13.) But those whom He recognizes as specially His servants are the Church of this Gospel Age--a special class of servants on special terms and agreements. These special servants are also called sons; that is to say, they are adopted, and promised that they will be fully inducted into the Divine family if they are faithful in God's service in the present time.

These servants represent a stewardship--a term common in olden time. The servant did with his master's goods as though they were his own. At the same time, while given this privilege, he was required to give an account to his employer. The master did not give him these goods and say, Use them as you like, and I will call for them when I want them. On the contrary, his stewardship was to be a faithful one, and would be examined later with this end in view--to see if he had been faithful. A faithful steward would be on the lookout for everything that represented the master's interests--would be as careful of these as he would be of his own. He would use his every power for increasing the talent--

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represented by the money in his care.

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

In the parable of the Talents the Lord represented a man as going into a far country and leaving the talents

in the care of his stewards. They were entrusted with these goods in a very special way. Thus it is with us. Each of us is entrusted with certain talents. At the time of consecration we gave our all to God. Having given all that we have and are to the Lord, He accepts our offering and appoints us His stewards over these goods--these things that we had. This would include our all--time, influence, various talents--for business, music, or what not. All these are the Master's after we have made consecration. We belong to Christ. He is the Head, He is Lord. But He commits to us as His faithful servants all these talents, to use for Him. And He says, "Occupy till I come."

This parable applies to all the Church all the way down this Age. Each servant is to be diligent in occupying the position of steward until he is released from it. The steward who would use his position merely to glorify himself would not be a faithful steward. The faithful steward would be the one who would desire to so use the talents as to increase the Master's wealth, the Master's glory.

The Lord gave an illustration of the faithful and unfaithful stewards at His Second Coming--before He will deal at all with the subjects of the Kingdom--mankind in general. He showed how He will call these servants to whom He has given the talents; for He has promised them that He will make them rulers with Him in His Kingdom, if they are faithful in the use of their talents. In the parable, the one who received five talents doubled them, and made them ten. The one who had received two talents made them four. But the one who had received one talent gave the excuse that he had buried it in the earth, because afraid. And he was declared to be an unfaithful servant.

This servant was not sent to eternal torment, but the talent was taken from him. It was of his own volition that he became a steward. Seeing that he had become a steward, he deserved to be punished because he did not use that which his lord had entrusted to him. That talent belonged to his lord.

An unfaithful steward will be punished for his unfaithfulness. Better that we should not enter into the Lord's service at all than that we should enter and then hold back, neglect our opportunities. If the one who had the five talents had held back, his simply doing nothing would have made him responsible. In showing how he dealt with the one who had the one talent, the Lord is emphasizing the matter the more. These talents represent our opportunities for service according to our several abilities. The one who had less ability was given less opportunity than the one who had more ability.

So with us. Some may have handicaps of various kinds. Some have more talents, or abilities; some have less. We cannot use talents we do not possess. It is required of a man that he be found faithful with what he has. This matter of using all the talents calls up the

thought of full, complete loyalty of heart devotion. We should not say, I am doing better than somebody else, as the man with five talents might have thought had he used but three or four of them. But the one who is using his talents to the full capacity is specially pleasing to the Lord. Those who have two talents and use them faithfully receive the same commendation as the one who has five talents and uses the five.

THE PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD

The parable of the unjust steward (Luke 16:1-9), which impresses this same lesson, was primarily addressed to Jesus' disciples, in the presence of the Pharisees and those who sat in Moses' seat, who were the representatives of the Divine order of things in the Jewish Age. In this parable the Lord emphasizes the fact that a wise steward would be alert to his own future welfare. If a debtor could not pay one hundred per cent., but could pay fifty, it would be wise for the steward, in consideration of his own interests, to keep the future good will of the man, and let him pay half. This steward was commended by his lord for his shrewdness in taking this course, even though he had previously been unfaithful to him.

The Scribes and Pharisees are scored in the parable. Our Lord's words intimated, You know that you are not yourselves able to pay the Divine requirements of the Law--you are not able to pay fifty cents on the dollar, and you ought to feel sympathetic with some of these poor Jews who cannot keep the Law. You should say to them, Cut it down somewhat--keep half the Law, if you cannot keep it all. Can you keep half? Yes? Well, go ahead and keep half.

But, said the Lord, you despise all these--you do not want to "brush garments" with them as you pass them in the streets. You know that you cannot keep the Law yourselves. You are in the position of the steward of My parable. You should take the same course as that steward took with his master's debtors. He was about to be dispossessed. So you are near the end of your term. When you get out of office the people will not think much of you. You would better help your case out. You sit in Moses' seat. You should tell your brethren that while they are not keeping the Law in full, they are pretty nice people; and you should encourage them to do the best they can. You should help them along.

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After giving this parable respecting the Pharisees, Jesus turned to his disciples, saying, "I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness." That is to say, Applying this to yourselves now, consider that your earthly possessions are an earthly stewardship. Live in harmony with the people as far as justice will permit. Do not in any way exact the last

thing possible from them. Be generous in all your affairs --not only in financial matters. Instead of condemning everybody and threatening them with eternal torment, tell them that God is very merciful. Tell them that God has provided a Redeemer for all mankind. Tell them to be of good courage and to do the best they can--that they may be sure that God through Christ will be very merciful, and that they will have better dealings at His hands when the time of their testing shall come.

By teaching the people thus, we may get the ill-will of the scribe and Pharisee class; but we are getting the good will of the people and of those who are in harmony with God and righteousness. And although we may be excluded from the high functions of the nominal systems, many of the common people are hearing gladly and sympathetically, and are wishing to share their homes with us. And so we have homes all over the world, wherever God's people are; for they have the ear and eye to appreciate the Lord's arrangement. Furthermore the Lord Himself will ultimately receive us into everlasting habitations. We are wise stewards in this respect. We are living so as to use our time and strength to the best of our ability to do good and to instruct others to do good.

TWO PARABLES COMPARED

The parables of the Talents and of the Pounds are much alike, both representing a great householder, or lord, dealing with his servants. In the parable of the Pounds, a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. This parable is based upon the fact that when an under-king, like King Herod, would hear that a new Emperor had come to the throne of Rome, he would be anxious for a re-appointment to his own kingdom. Knowing that the Emperor had power to reinstate him, he would be desirous to know whether he would receive his kingdom again, or whether someone else would receive the place. So when such under-king went to Rome, it was with the view of returning with his kingdom, or a commission from the new Emperor.

Our Lord in this picture represents Himself as a Nobleman who had been called to a Throne, and who was going to a far country, to Heaven itself, to receive the investiture of His Kingdom. In due time He was to be the great Messiah; and He must first be invested with the authority, and then return and establish His Kingdom.

In the parable of the Talents, the lord, before leaving, called in his servants and committed unto them his goods, his property. He said, I will make these servants stewards. He gave one talent to one, two talents to another, and five to still another, according to their several ability. They were all remembered. When he returned he called his servants and reckoned with them. The one with two talents came and said, Lord, thou gavest me two talents. Here I make my report. I have gained two other

talents. The one with the five talents said, Lord, thou gavest me five talents; lo, I have gained other five! I have doubled the amount and gotten ten! The Lord said to each, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

Then came the servant with only one talent. Although he returned it, he had failed to use it. He said, I have not lost a penny; here is thine own. His Lord said unto him, Thou art a slothful and wicked servant! The servant was punished because he was unfaithful.

OPPORTUNITY MEASURES RESPONSIBILITY

The Lord gave this parable as an illustration of our experiences now. These talents consist of opportunities. To illustrate: We recently had the talent, or opportunity, of speaking the Truth to 5,000 people. Therefore we had a responsibility. But if we do not have such an opportunity,

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we do not have the responsibility of it. This is what the Lord meant, we understand. One may have more opportunities granted him than another. One person might be a good writer; another a good speaker; another a good exhorter; and another may be good at all three of these things. The one good at all three would have thereby three times as much responsibility as the one with only the one ability.

The talent in Bible times represented a certain amount of money. According to the most recent figures available (Am. Bib. Soc'y, 1895), the talent mentioned in the Scriptures was either gold or silver. The value in U.S. money of the gold talent is \$32,689, while the silver talent was but \$1,563.37. Our Lord, however, used the talent, not to represent gold or silver, but as well representing the opportunities His people have to do God's will and to serve the brethren; for He says that whoever does good to one of the least of His will receive a blessing.

The lesson taught in the parable of the Pounds seems somewhat different. In this the lord gave each of his servants one pound, to do what he could with what was given him. One gained five pounds, and one gained ten. The third gained nothing. The Pound (Mina, or Maneh), is equivalent, if gold, to \$6,537.80; if silver, \$312.67-1/2.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ONE POUND TO EACH

In the application of the parable, to our understanding, the Pound represents the blessing of justification given to each of God's children. When did He give us the Pound? When He accepted us as His servants. When did He accept us as servants? We were not servants when we first turned from sin. To turn from

sin is not to become a servant. The first step toward God is to turn away from sin toward righteousness, and to attempt to draw nigh unto God; for God says, "Draw nigh unto Me and I will draw nigh unto you."

This one is walking in the way to justification, but has not gotten it. He is getting nearer and nearer to the right place in his ideas, etc. Finally he comes to the place where he says, Lord, if Thou wilt accept me, I will give Thee all I have. He offers himself to be God's servant.

One is not yet a servant of the Lord when he turns from sin. We never had a right to do wrong; and in getting away from sin and wrong, we were not serving God. God has no servants in this Age except those begotten of the Holy Spirit. Others may in some sense be used as servants; for God can use even the wrath of man to serve Him. In a certain sense the Devil may be His servant; for sometimes he does what the Lord wishes to be done. We think the Devil was serving God when he got the Jews stirred up to crucify Jesus. Demons often serve the Lord in bringing tribulation upon His people, for these tribulations are like the turning of the grindstone, that polishes the jewel. God wishes to use some means at the present time to polish His jewel class.

But the servants referred to in the parables are the

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Lord's consecrated people; for it is only those who have reached the point of full consecration to God that He calls His servants. Those who gave up the service of sin and unrighteousness, became their own servants, the servants of self, until they gave up their lives to the Lord. They then said, I have no will but Thine. I will serve Thee faithfully, even unto death. As the Lord accepts these as His servants, He gives each one a pound.

What is this pound? It is justification to life--a valuable thing. Now, being justified by faith, and being thus accepted as a servant of God, and begotten of the Holy Spirit, each one has the opportunity to do what he is able as a servant of the Lord. He uses whatever talents the Lord gives him. He must do his best with all that is entrusted to his care, as a faithful steward of the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

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REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

"My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."--EXOD. 33:14.

WE ARE NOT to think of our Heavenly Father as literally walking through the wilderness

with the children of Israel, as leaving the affairs of the Universe and going with them in their journey. Nor are we to get the thought that God is everywhere at the same time. This unscriptural thought has been the foundation for much error. Christian Scientists say that God is everywhere--in every piece of wood, of china--in everything. When we ask what they mean, they say that since the word God simply stands for good, and since there is good in everything, therefore God must be in everything; for God means good and must be everywhere, even in every atom of matter. So on this erroneous doctrine of God's omnipresence they build their theory. But theirs is not the Scriptural thought.

The Scriptural thought is that God specially manifests His Power and Love to His people. God is in Heaven; the earth is His footstool. But by His various powers and agents, and by His intelligence and knowledge, He can be as if present everywhere--through His angels, His messengers. Just as we by the telegraph and the telephone can have communication with the uttermost parts of the earth, so God can exercise His Power in every part of the Universe.

The words of our text, we remember, were the Lord's answer to Moses when that great statesman was in perplexity. He had been commanded to go forward as the leader of Israel, and through Divine favor to bring them into the land of Canaan, there to give them rest.

From the beginning of the wilderness journey, there was more or less of disinclination or fear on the part of the people. They realized that they were breaking up their homes and going forth into a strange land. Even though they had been oppressed by the Egyptians, they reasoned that if they went out into the wilderness with no Egyptian taskmasters, this would mean that they would have no food. Thus they were stiff-necked--like an ox--difficult to turn about.

The Lord's promise to Moses was, "My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." And He promised to be with the Israelites. He gave them assurance that they might recognize His power in their midst; for God's energy in all the affairs of earth, as of the Universe, is not merely a power to know the things that are happening, but to control all events that they may outwork His designs. He guides and assists the efforts of His people. Additionally, the angels of the Lord quite probably were employed in this special work of superintending the affairs of the Israelites.

This thought is in harmony with the Scripture which intimates that there is a guardian angel for each one of the Lord's saints, who has supervision over him. We read, "In Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven." (Matt. 18:10.) They have immediate communication with the Father; and thus He has direct oversight of all who belong to Him.

The Divine Power was manifested directly with the Israelites in the Shekinah glory over the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy, which indicated the Lord's presence with them. And when they were to journey onward, the pillar of cloud went before them by day, and the pillar of fire by night. When they were to stop, this cloud would stand still. While they were encamped, the cloud would rest over the Tabernacle, and the Shekinah glory rested between the cherubim on the Mercy-Seat in the Tabernacle. Thus the presence of God went with them to the Land of Canaan, and gave them all things which He had promised --Joshua 23:14.

MOSES' NEED OF ENCOURAGEMENT

From our context we perceive that Moses' meekness was again manifesting itself. He had previously asked for some one to be mouthpiece for him, and the Lord had said that Aaron might be his mouthpiece. Rash people often get into trouble, because there is a lack of meekness, modesty. But it was not so with Moses--"the meekest man in all the earth." Humility is a most important element of character. The meek man will find it easier to be gentle and patient than will the man who lacks meekness. And so in enumerating the fruits of the Holy Spirit St. Paul mentions meekness.--Gal. 5:23.

When the Lord promised that His presence should go with Moses, He was speaking to him as the Mediator. Therefore He said, "My Presence shall go with thee." As soon as Moses had inaugurated the Law Covenant at Sinai, Israel was in covenant relationship with God, and the Lord with Israel.

ISRAEL'S FAILURE TO ENTER REST

One might get the thought that God's promise to give rest would signify that Moses should have a rest of mind, and that all who would come into line with Moses and with God's promises would also have a rest of mind. But this mental rest is not what is here meant. The Israelites were going from the land of Egypt into the Land of Promise, which was to be an everlasting inheritance to them, if they would keep their Covenant. But of all the adults who came out of Egypt, only Caleb and Joshua entered into Canaan. (Num. 32:11,12.) The majority failed to enter in because of their lack of faith. The forty years' wandering in the desert was because of their fearfulness and consequent rebellion.

When on the wilderness journey Israel came finally to the place where they could see the land of Canaan, spies were sent to make investigation and to report as to which would be the best way to enter the promised land. All of the spies save Caleb and Joshua, gave an unfavorable report. Then through timidity the people said, "We cannot go up and take that land. Those people are giants, and we look like grasshoppers beside them." So in their

lack of faith they murmured against going up. Therefore God swore in His wrath, "This people shall not enter into My rest."--Hebrews 3:11.

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TYPICAL AND ANTITYPICAL REST

The Apostle Paul shows that the rest in Canaan was a type of the rest of the people of God, in this Gospel Age. (Heb. 4:3,9.) By faith we rest in God--we rest in His promises. We are not moved away by any of the adverse conditions of the present time. Our rest is the reality; the rest of Israel was the type.

The antitypical rest, into which the Lord's people enter, has two phases. We who believe enter into rest now. We have the peace of God ruling in our hearts and guiding our lives. We have the peace of faith, the rest of faith, the confidence that God will direct our course. Therefore we are contented, even though not yet satisfied. We shall not be satisfied until we enter into our complete rest. Our true rest will be that glorious, perfect condition beyond the veil, which we shall attain through the First Resurrection.

St. Paul, in discussing this question in the 3d and 4th chapters of Hebrews, declares that the people of Israel failed to enter into rest, not because God did not perform His part, but because they failed to exercise the proper faith in the Lord; they had "an evil heart of unbelief." And he proceeds to say, "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1.) There are requirements; there are conditions. The Apostle means that whoever would be of this overcoming class must take heed, or he will fail to enter into the eternal rest of God. There will be such a class of overcomers; and God has predestined and foreordained that they shall enter into this glorious and perfect rest. If we are faithful unto death, we shall attain this glorious rest by the resurrection "change."

JOSHUA A TYPE OF CHRIST

The world is not now able to enter into rest. They are like the raging sea. They have not come into relationship with God. As the Scriptures tell us, mankind is a poor, groaning creation, travailing together in pain. They do not see the rest which God has provided. We see, however, that when the antitypical Moses, the great Mediator, shall have been completed, He will lead the people into rest.--Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22.

Moses did not lead the people into the Land of Promise; it was Joshua--their new leader--who led them over Jordan. Thus the type shows that mankind will enter into the promised land, not by the Law, but by a Savior. The name Joshua means savior--Greek Jesus. (Heb. 4:8,

margin.) So Jesus will lead all of mankind who will, into the true Land of Promise--into love and loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness. It will take the entire thousand years of the Messianic Kingdom to bring the world into condition for all the blessings which God has in store for them.

Our Lord Jesus entered into rest by trusting the Heavenly Father to fulfil all His gracious promises. Jesus, the Head of the antitypical Moses, thus enjoyed perfect rest of heart, and realized the Heavenly Father's continual presence with Him. This continued for three and a half years; and then He entered into the rest complete, by the First Resurrection.

The same is true of all the members of the Body of the antitypical Moses--The Christ. God's presence goes with them. The world at present is not in a condition to enter into the Father's rest. Only the members of the Body of Christ have entered into this rest of faith, trusting in the Lord. And none except those who continue faithful will be recognized as members of the great antitypical Mediator. All who lack faith lack proof that they are in the Body of Christ. If, then, our hearts are disturbed and we cannot enter into this rest of faith, the proper course is to seek the Throne of Grace, that we may overcome the difficulty.

THE REST PROVIDED FOR MANKIND

As for those Israelites who the Lord said should not enter into His rest, we understand Him to mean, not that no Jew will enter into the true rest of God, but rather, that this was a prophecy of the end of the Jewish Age--that they as a nation would not be ready to enter into this rest of faith which was then offered them--that as a nation they would fail. They did fail; for "they knew not the day of their visitation."

As soon as the great Messiah shall establish the New Covenant, both Jews and Gentiles will enter into peace and prosperity, as rapidly as they enter into that New Covenant. But the disobedient, after a full, fair trial, will go into the Second Death. Throughout the Millennial Age mankind will be entering into the actual rest, which will mean deliverance from the bondage of Sin and Death. Before Messiah's Reign shall have ended, they will have fully entered into that rest and into perfection of life, and will be counted in as a part of the seed of Abraham, according to the promise, "I have constituted thee a father of many nations." (Gen. 17:5; Rom. 4:17.) The blessing of the Lord will be upon them all. Any refusing to enter into the rest of God will be cut off--the wilful sinner shall die at one hundred years of age.--Isa. 65:20.

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"WOE UNTO YOU, PHARISEES!"

--FEBRUARY 15.--LUKE 11:37-54.--

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked."--GALATIANS 6:7.

AMONGST the various sects of the Jews of our Lord's day we have every reason to believe that the Pharisees constituted the best--the one most loyal to God and His Law. The Sadducees professed no faith in a future life. They were infidels and politicians. The Essenes were a small sect not mentioned in the Bible, a kind of Higher Critics, of little faith and confused by mixing paganism with Judaism. The Pharisees were what might be termed the orthodox body of Jews. Their name signifies "holy people." In today's Study, Jesus, not deigning to mention the other sects, which had entirely departed from God, addresses Himself especially to the Pharisees, pointing out wherein, with all their boasted holiness, they came far short of what would be acceptable to God.

A Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him at his house. The invitation was promptly accepted, and Jesus passed in and sat down at the table with the others, without going through the formalism of washings, customary to the Pharisees. We are not from this to suppose that Jesus was careless. Rather, we are to recognize that the washing of hands by the Pharisees was a ceremony which Jesus especially wished to ignore, in order that He might have the opportunity of criticising that spirit which the ceremony well illustrated.

The host thought of Jesus as a holy man, not a publican or a sinner, and remarked that it was strange that He had not performed the usual ceremony of washing.

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This remark gave opportunity for a discourse on the subject. Jesus pointed out that a great deal of the religion which even the holiest of the Jews practised was merely ceremony, formalism, and not true religion. Outwardly they were clean, but inwardly their hearts were unclean--given to extortion--spiritual wickedness. The Lord sought to show that in God's sight the heart is the important matter and that the outward cleansing is quite secondary. The inside of the cup should first be attended to, and afterward the outside.

As a matter of fact, those who do come into heart harmony with the Lord, and who are cleansed by obedience to His Message and its spirit, are thereby made clean every whit--outwardly, as well as inwardly. It is safe to say that every one who is pure in heart will, according

to his circumstances and opportunities, seek to be clean in person, in speech, in every way. The principle working in his heart will exercise an influence upon all his words and thoughts and doings--all his days and all his hours.

From the expressions of our Lord here and elsewhere it would appear that one of the great failings of the Pharisees was covetousness. According to the Greek, Jesus called them "money-lovers." On one occasion He told them that this covetousness, greed, love of money, led them to disregard dishonestly the rights of others. He said: Ye devour widows' houses, meaning that they would take advantage of widows to accumulate property for themselves. As a matter of fact, it would appear that many of the Pharisees were quite rich.

Jesus pointed out that with such wrong conditions of heart God could not be well pleased with them, even though they ever so carefully observed the outward regulations of the Jewish Law. He called attention to the fact that in their outward observance of the tithing (giving one-tenth of their income every year) they were particular even to those small seeds of which they grew but a trifling quantity. In everything they were careful to give one-tenth, but they neglected the weightier matters of the Law--to do justice in their dealings and to have mercy toward others. The Master did not object to their giving one-tenth of everything, but declared that these things they should do and not to leave the more important things undone.

Another time He reproved them, saying, Ye strain a gnat and swallow a camel--a strong hyperbole, a figure of speech, showing how inconsistent were their reasonings and doings. The straining out of a gnat represented their carefulness to avoid things strangled. The swallowing of a camel meant that, on the contrary, while careful about the little things, they would be thoroughly disregarding of God's Law on the weightier matters. Jesus declared that they should be benevolent rather than covetous and self-seeking, and that if this were their disposition of heart the outward cleanliness would be less important.

He declared that they chose the chief seats in the synagogue and salutations in the market-places. Their covetousness took the form of pride, as well as dishonesty. They wanted to be very prominent in things religious, to be very popular and to be hailed as "Rabbi"--master, learned one. Jesus declared that they were like sepulchres, outwardly clean and whitewashed, but inwardly full of death, corruption, uncleanness, unholiness. They were holiness people merely in the outward form or ceremonial.

It is not for us to judge all or any of the sects of Christendom and to apply the Master's words to them. Unlike Jesus, we have not the power to read men's hearts, nor the authority to pronounce them hypocrites. The Lord's message to us is, "Judge [condemn] nothing

before the time." At His Second Coming, He declares, everything will be revealed. The true status of each will be shown. He declares that at that time many will be saying, Lord, have we not done many mighty works in Thy name? but that He will, nevertheless, declare to them: I do not recognize you. Ye have been workers of iniquity--workers of unrighteousness--in My name.

Without judging personally, we may all fear that much of the Christianity of our time is well described by the Apostle Paul. Speaking of our day he says, "Having a form of godliness, but denying its power"--outwardly Christians, but inwardly skeptics--covetous, extortionate, unjust. Men are not able to judge rightly of such matters today. Some who are loyal and zealous for the Lord are branded as hypocrites and deceivers; while others, disloyal, merely whited sepulchres, may be lauded to the skies as denominational idols or generous benefactors of earthly systems.

Some of the Pharisees, especially educated, talented and well-versed in the teachings of the Law and the Prophets, were styled lawyers--Doctors of the Law, the equivalent of what today are termed Doctors of Divinity. Turning to these, Jesus upbraided them, saying that they placed upon the common people grievous burdens which they themselves would not bear. He meant that they gave such hard interpretations of God's Law as were discouraging to the common people--setting before the publicans and sinners standards of excellence and perfection which they themselves would not think of even trying to live up to. Apparently the thought was

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thereby to impress the common people with the sanctity of the clergy, that they might be the more reverential toward them. They builded sepulchres for the Prophets of old, forgetful that their fathers, whose same spirit they had, were the very ones who had killed those Prophets--had persecuted them to death.

WOE! WOE! WOE! WOE! WOE!

While Jesus prophesied woes against the Pharisees, we are not to think of Him as condemning them to eternal torment, nor as intimating that this would be the nature of the woe that would come upon them. The woe to the Pharisees was that they were about to miss the great blessing which God had promised to the Jewish nation; namely, that of chief association in Messiah's Kingdom. (Genesis 12:3.) The Promise belonged to Israel primarily. Because of their unpreparedness for it, this was taken from them to be given to another Israel. Had enough of them been "Israelites indeed" to complete God's foreordained Elect, the Bride of Christ, the Kingdom offer would not have gone to the Gentiles.

The Pharisees, of all the Jews, were in the most favored

place for attaining to joint-heirship with Messiah; but they recognized not what they were losing, as Jesus recognized it. His expression, "Woe unto you," is therefore to be regarded sympathetically, pityingly. This thought is borne out in the context, which proceeds to declare the great time of trouble which came upon their nation at the time of Jesus' crucifixion, and reached its completion in A.D. 70 in the total destruction of their city and polity.

As the Lord here declares, that awful trouble was a settlement of Jehovah's account with the Jewish nation for all the righteous blood which had been shed and for which no expiation had been made. Little did those Pharisees know that their hypocrisy was not only hindering

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themselves from preparation to be joint-heirs with Messiah in His Kingdom, but was also hindering the masses of the people, who relied upon them for information. Jesus refers to this in the succeeding verse (52), saying, Ye have taken away the key of knowledge. Ye neither enter into the Kingdom yourselves, nor do you permit others to enter who would be glad to do so, but who are misled by relying upon your judgment.

Bible students very generally believe that the great time of trouble which closed the Jewish Age was an advanced picture, or prophecy, of the still wider spread of the Time of Trouble which will close this Gospel Age and bring woe to many of the Pharisees of our day, as well as tribulation upon all evil-doers in connection with the overthrow of present institutions, as a prelude to the establishment of Justice--the Messianic Reign of Glory.

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GOOD CONFESSION VERSUS BAD CONFESSION

--FEBRUARY 22.--LUKE 12:1-12.--

"Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God."--V.8.

A LARGE crowd surrounded the Savior, anxious to hear Him who "spake as never man spake." Ignoring the multitude, Jesus addressed His disciples, saying: "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Here, as elsewhere in His teachings, Jesus uses leaven as a symbol, or figure, of an evil influence. We know not of one instance in which leaven is used to represent anything good or pure. During the Passover season Jews were prohibited from

using it, thus symbolizing the putting away of sin.

Jesus declared that the hypocrisies practised by the Pharisees--the learned people of that time--were leaven, impurity, sin, contaminating in their influence. His disciples should be honest, sincere, pure, free from cant and deception. Their words and works should be such as would not need to be covered. Jesus declared that ultimately all hypocrisies and sins will be uncovered, revealed. Undoubtedly He meant that during His Kingdom, when the power of the resurrection will be exercised, all the hidden things of darkness will be abolished, the secrets of mankind will be exposed. No doubt this will constitute the basis of the shame and contempt which will be the punishment of many, as foretold.

Thus we read that in the resurrection some will come forth to shine as the stars of heaven, and others to shame and everlasting contempt. (Daniel 12:2.) However, it is comforting to know that the Hebrew text signifies lasting and not everlasting. The shame and contempt will last as long as the shameful and contemptible conditions last--until the reformation of the individual or, that failing, until his destruction in the Second Death.

FEAR NOT PERSECUTIONS

Jesus intimated that honesty of life would bring His followers persecution from the hypocrites; but that they should not fear, even though the persecution resulted in their death. The present life is but ephemeral, at best. The life that is worth considering is the everlasting one which God has provided for all the willing and obedient, and which may eventually be attained through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice. Those who thus believe should have no fear of what man can do to them, but rather should be fearful of anything that would separate them from God and His gracious provisions of a future life.

"Fear Him who after He hath killed hath power to cast into Hell." The word Hell here is Gehenna in the Greek. Primarily, this is the name of the valley outside of Jerusalem, into which the offal of the city was cast for utter destruction, and into which the vilest criminals were cast after execution--not to torment them, but to imply symbolically that there was no future for the wicked. Jesus used Gehenna as a type of the Second Death, which will be the portion of all who wilfully, intelligently, deliberately, sin against light and knowledge.

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and a reverential fear is always proper. But as God's people become intimately acquainted with Him, learning of His Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, and realize that He is the Friend of all who love righteousness, they come to love God; and, as the Apostle declares, "Perfect love casteth out fear [dread to offend]," which signifies rest. The Lord's disciples were to realize their Heavenly Father's care for them and His Wisdom--that as He forgets not the sparrows, so He will not forget them; and

that not even a hair of their heads could be injured without his knowledge and permission; that everything that He permits to come to His people, to His children, He assures them, will work out for them some blessing.

CONFESS ME BEFORE MEN

Whoever would be in accord with God must confess Him and must confess Jesus, His Representative, whom He sent into the world. Whoever confesses Jesus, confesses the Father who sent Him. And all such will be in the Lord's favor, and ultimately be acknowledged in the resurrection by the Father and the holy angels, as members of the Bride of Christ. But those who, after becoming disciples of Christ, deny Him, He will not acknowledge as disciples in glory.

Jesus' words were addressed to the disciples, not to the masses. Whoever would confess Christ would become His disciple. None could deny Him who had never acknowledged Him. He is to be confessed, not merely by baptism, nor by any outward form. He is to be confessed in the life, in the conduct, in the words, of His followers. They are to have His Spirit and to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light." Whoever makes a profession of being a disciple, and then ignores the Master's teachings, misrepresents Him, slanders Him, denies Him, and will not share in the glorious presentation of the Bride, in the end of this Age.

The masses, of course, were in doubt, and did not become disciples at all. Some even derided Jesus, saying that He had a devil and was mad. The Master declared that such misunderstanding of Him and such slanders were quite forgivable, if done ignorantly. But when some went beyond this, and declared that His good works of the Holy Spirit were accomplished through the power of Satan, Beelzebub, they were committing inexcusable sins which would not be passed over.

Such sin must be wilful; for their accusations had no basis whatever. The Master's teachings were purity itself. His conduct, His sayings and His miracles were all good works. Only a wilful perversity could attribute these to Satan. The fact that they would never be forgiven does not signify, however, that the vilifiers were hopelessly lost. They would suffer punishment proportionate to the degree of their wilfulness. If the punishment would bring reformation, well and good; but if not, it would eventuate in utter destruction--the Second Death.

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Few subjects are less understood than this one--the sin against the Holy Spirit. The word spirit in such a case as this stands for power, or influence. For instance, the spirit of Satan would be the power, or influence, adverse

to God and to righteousness. The spirit of error would be the power, or influence, of falsehood. Contrariwise, the spirit of Truth, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, represents Divine influence and power, wherever recognized. The responsibility of each individual is proportionate to his enlightenment. The mentally and morally blind have comparatively little responsibility, because they do not appreciate clearly the distinction between the spirit of Truth and the spirit of error, the Spirit of God and the spirit of Satan.

Man was not created in this condition of inability to discern right and wrong, good and evil. He was created perfect, in the image and likeness of God. Sin has wrought death, not merely to man's body, but also to his mind, his conscience. The ability to discern between right and wrong varies, therefore. Additionally, some have opportunities for instruction more than others, and thus their responsibility is increased. The world in general knows not God, and hence could not sin against the Holy Spirit in that full sense or degree which would be punished with the Second Death. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."-- 2 Corinthians 4:4.

Some knowledge is necessary to bring us to an appreciation of Christ as the Sent of God. Then if we accept Him and become His consecrated disciples, or followers, we receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit. This brings us to a vantage point where our eyes of understanding open more and more widely, in proportion as we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Our responsibility increases with our joy in the Lord and our preparation for the Heavenly glories to which we have been called. It is these advanced disciples of Jesus that are in danger of grieving the Holy Spirit whereby they were sealed--of quenching the Spirit of holiness in their hearts. (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19.) While the quenching and the grieving are not instantaneous works, they are the paths which lead to the Second Death. Every Christian, therefore, should press on toward perfection of holiness--the filling with the Spirit.

The Apostle presents this thought in Hebrews 6:4-6, declaring that those who have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the Age to come, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, cannot be renewed unto repentance, if they with full wilfulness and deliberation reject Christ and righteousness, and turn to sin. Again, later on, he says (Hebrews 10:26,27), "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received a knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for our sins, but a certain fearful looking for a decision and a fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries"--of God. The Apostle mentions especially the rejection of the atoning work of Christ, saying that such count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified a common thing, and do despite to the Spirit of favor which has brought them thus far.

Those who quench the Spirit of holiness, or "grieve the Spirit," are described by St. James (5:14) as spiritually sick. Cut off from fellowship with God, they have one last resort; viz., to request the assistance of sanctified elders of the Church to pray for them and to anoint them with oil, symbolic of the Holy Spirit. The prayer of faith shall save these spiritually sick; and the Lord will raise them up; and though they have committed sins, these shall be forgiven them.

"THE HOLY SPIRIT SHALL TEACH"

The Lord's faithful followers were to expect that amongst their tribulations would be false accusations which would bring them before magistrates. For the most part the disciples were unlearned, and would feel great trepidation in the presence of educated officials. They were to know, however, that the Lord's blessing would be upon them; and that they would have wisdom superior to that which was naturally theirs. They need not anxiously premeditate what their answers would be, but commit all to the Lord, expecting Divine assistance.

Nothing in this implies that the ministers of Christ either in the pulpit or in the class meeting should attempt to represent the Lord without studying their subject. On the contrary, each should accept to himself St. Paul's words to Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." (2 Timothy 2:15.) There is a difference between standing before a congregation of God's people as a mouthpiece of His Word and being called before magistrates.

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ST. PAUL'S EXHORTATION TO ELDERS

"Take heed to yourselves,...for grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."--ACTS 20:29,30.

THESE words were addressed to the Elders of the Church at Ephesus. St. Paul, going toward Jerusalem, had found himself not far from Ephesus, and had sent word to the Elders that he would remain there a little while, and would be glad to meet them once more. They came and held a lengthy conference with him. This text is part of his message to them. He told them that he would not see them again, and exhorted them to take heed to themselves. It behooves every one to take heed to himself more than to others. And unless

a man learns to rule his own spirit, he could not be in a proper condition to rule others.

This is particularly true of all Elders. They should watch themselves. Because of the honor which the Church gives them, they are in danger of being carried away by a feeling of self-importance--self-conceit. They are in danger of becoming arrogant. But the message is to take heed to themselves, and to the flock of God, over whom they are made overseers. They are to recognize their position as representatives, not only of the Congregation, but also of the Lord. This position being given them in the appointed way--an election by the stretching forth of the hand--they are not only to take this as the word of the Church, but also to realize that they are chosen of the Holy Spirit. They are to recognize this care of the Church as their great mission, an important service to be rendered in the name of the Lord.

WOLVES AND APOSTATE SHEEP

There are two particular reasons why Elders need to be on guard. The first reason, as given by the Apostle, was that grievous wolves would enter in among them, who would not spare the flock. The intimation seems to be that the wolves are not part of the flock at any time. They would not represent themselves as wolves, however. The Apostle's warning would seem to imply that a certain class of people of a wolfish nature

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would seek to associate themselves with the Church. Our Lord warned, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." (Matt. 7:15.) This seems to imply the thought of deception--walking like sheep, going about amongst the sheep and representing themselves to be sheep, wearing sheep's clothing, but never being real sheep. Their object in coming into the flock is selfish, their influence is that of a wolf amongst sheep. A wolf worries the sheep--his intention is to kill them, to suck their blood.

So there seems to be a class who, for no reason that we can imagine, pervert the truth, injuring the flock, stirring up arguments that confuse the flock, destroying them as New Creatures, and dragging them down to death. Presumably there has been such a class all the way down through the Age. While our text does not imply that sheep could ever become wolves, perhaps some of us have known persons who at one time were sheep, but who after a while manifested a wolfish disposition, and took pleasure in doing all that they could to injure the flock. The Lord and the Apostle warn us that we should beware of those who come in amongst the sheep, palming themselves off as sheep.

In addition to this danger from wolves, there will be dangers among themselves. The Apostle points this out

as a very subtle danger. In addition to those of the wolfish nature, some in a class will engage in service as teachers, and by speaking perverse things will seek to draw away disciples unto themselves. They seek

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to draw them away as their own. Their sentiment seems to be, This is my class, my flock--not recognizing that the Church is the Lord's Flock, that they are the Lord's sheep. In this there is a selfish attitude quite contrary to the Spirit of the Lord and to the Scriptures. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" is a principle of the Divine Government. If any one would be a true Elder, a real servant of the Lord, he is to remember these things, and to avoid everything that would be of a self-seeking spirit. Otherwise, he may be sure that he will do injury, not only to himself, but to others also, by such a course.

RESPONSIBILITY PROPORTIONATE TO ABILITY

Sheep are very timid animals and need some kind of leading. In the absence of a shepherd, they need some one of their own number to be, as it were, leader for them. In flocks of sheep there are wise sheep--rams of the flock, leaders--that the sheep learn to follow, in the absence of the shepherd. These old rams of the flock would represent Elders in the Church of Christ. The ram's horns constitute a means of defense, with which he could drive off adversaries in a time of attack, and the sheep would be able to get behind him.

But the Scriptures speak of danger as respects some of the rams of the flock--certain leaders of the Lord's people. (Ezek. 34:17-23.) These rams got into the stream and made it muddy, defiling the water. He-goats are also mentioned; this is an illustration of the disposition of some Elders of the Church of Christ, and should not be lost upon us. We are told that owners of sheep sometimes use a goat as a leader of the flock, because a goat is more combative than a sheep, and thus supply the sheep courage, etc. We do not know how many of the Lord's Flock are being led by a goat. But whenever any one manifests the goat disposition, the Ecclesia should strictly avoid making him a leader.

The proper leaders are those who show the proper disposition. The Church is very much at the mercy of the leaders; hence the latter have the greater responsibility. So the Apostle says, Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that a man who is a teacher has the severer trial, the severer test. (Paraphrase of James 3:1, R.V.) He has the greater responsibility in proportion to his ability. It would seem, then, that all who accept the position of Elders are, to some extent, representing the Lord, who is the great Shepherd of the Flock.

LEVITICUS NINE AND SIXTEEN

APPARENTLY we have failed to make clear our thought respecting the teachings of these two chapters. Our statement in TABERNACLE SHADOWS that they both picture the Day of Atonement sacrifices has been misunderstood. We do not mean to say that the two ceremonies took place on the same particular Day of Atonement. Our thought is that the antitype of the two took place at the same time in the antitypical Atonement Day--the Gospel Age.

The record of the Ninth Chapter relates to the consecration of the priests. The service there pictured represents the consecration of Aaron, and was to be repeated in the case of every priest who attained the office of high priest. That is to say, this service was to be repeated only when a high priest should die and his successor in the office should be inaugurated. Thus the ceremony might be performed several times in one year, if several high priests, one after another, died in one year and successors took their places. Or this ceremony of Leviticus 9 might not be repeated for many years; as, for example, Aaron lived nearly forty years after his appointment to the office, and hence not until his son Eleazar became high priest would this consecration service be repeated. On the contrary, the Day of Atonement described in the 16th Chapter recurred every year.

The lines of harmony between the two ceremonies are indicated by the sacrifices, which in both cases were a bullock and a goat. These represented the same sacrifices in antitype--the bullock representing the high priest and the goat representing the under priests; for Jesus died only once--not twice. Therefore the death of the bullock in both instances represented the one sacrifice of Jesus. And because the Church dies only once, therefore the sacrifice of the goat in both instances represents the death of the Church as members of the antitypical priesthood under the Headship of their great High Priest.

Why, then the two pictures? may be asked. We reply, Because the death of Jesus had two distinct aspects, and similarly the death of the Church has two aspects. Only by dying to the earthly nature was it possible for Jesus and the Church to attain the Heavenly nature and the office of the Royal Priesthood--to qualify for the work of Messiah. Even, therefore, if the world had not needed to be redeemed from sin, the Priest must have given the same sacrifice exactly, in order to attain His high position. And so would the under-priests. On the other hand, as mankind are sinners, needing to

be redeemed, atonement for sin would have been necessary before the work of Restitution could go on, entirely regardless of the exaltation of Christ and the Church to the Heavenly plane.

Thus the "better sacrifices" of Messiah cover two distinctly separate, yet both important, works. It was necessary that Jesus and His followers should suffer and enter into their glory. And this is emphasized by Leviticus 9. It was also necessary that a sacrifice for sins

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should be offered on behalf of mankind, in order to permit them to come to Restitution blessing; and this is typified in Leviticus 16. So we repeat that the sacrifices of Leviticus 9 and those of the 16th chapter are identical sacrifices, accomplished in this same antitypical Atonement Day--the Gospel Age.

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SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

ASSURANCE OF CONTINUED CONFIDENCE

OUR DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:--

The little Class of Shawnee appointed me to write and tell you that we passed a resolution assuring you of our steadfast faith in you and your leadings. We got the thought from reading the Nov. 15th WATCH TOWER, the article on "What Course Should We Take?" that you had almost decided that the things we have been expecting in 1914 would not come to pass on time--since you said it is possible, but not probable. Now, dear Brother, if these things do not come to pass until 2014, instead of 1914, our faith in you will be as great as it ever has been, for we believe that you have fought a good fight, that you have kept the faith, that you have almost finished your course, and that there is laid up for you a glorious Crown.

It seems to us that it would not be strange if the dear Lord would permit a short delay to try the faith of some who had perhaps consecrated to 1915, instead of until death.

May the dear Lord's richest blessings be upon you. In behalf of the Class, your brother in the Lord.

N. B. RANKIN.--Okla.

SAW NEED OF CRUCIFIED ONE AND THE VOW

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

I have intended writing you for some time to tell of my acceptance and appreciation of Present Truth, and of my experience with the Vow.

I am a girl of twenty-four years, and my father and my mother have been in the Truth about six years, during which time I have heard the Truth constantly in my home. Being of rather a studious nature, the knowledge appealed to me; but my heart refused to be touched. I could not doubt the verity of the Truth, but my stubborn will refused to bow in the subjection of full consecration.

However, the Lord in His mercy and wisdom permitted the very experience which, although bitter indeed, caused me to see the unreliability of my own judgment, and the need of a wiser hand than my own to guide my affairs. Our dear Brother Cole came just at that time, and pointed me to the only One who can lead us safely through all of life's affairs. I renewed my reading, and within two weeks made a consecration of myself on January 26, 1913. I cannot tell you of the deep joy with which my heart has since been filled.

But alas! from being too slow, I rushed to the other extreme and became too hasty, taking the Vow without duly considering its importance and all that it contains. Again our dear Lord gave me the necessary experience to show me my wrong course, which led me to make a serious and prayerful study of the Vow and all its different features; after which I took it again, and have been blessed and protected by it more than words can tell.

I desire to express to you my deep and heartfelt appreciation for all the grand truths I have received from the Lord through you as "that faithful Servant." May our Heavenly Father strengthen and sustain you until the work He has given you to do shall be finished. With much Christian love,
I am your sister in the Lord, _____.

WAS IN THE DEEPEST DESPAIR

MY DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:--

Since the desire to write to you does not want to be put down, am writing to express a little of my love and gratitude toward you. I thank the Heavenly Father for His Truth, for you and for all His dear people.

That I should be privileged to know the Truth, or to be a Christian at all, is still a source of amazement to me, for truly I was one of the mean of the earth, a chief among sinners.

Until December of 1911 I did not even believe the Bible. Jesus was beautiful, but imaginary, impossible.

The child of ungodly parents, whom I never knew or met until I was grown up, my life was a horrible one. That December, through reading a book (not one of yours) I was convinced through sound reasoning that Jesus really was the Son of God, and that it was possible for Him to become flesh.

That was the starting point. What a hopeless muddle I had made of my life! How could I possibly extricate myself from the net of circumstances in which I was living! But I did what I could--right about faced--and prayed with all my strength for more light and to be shown the next step. There were nine whole months of that, with apparently no answer to

prayer; but thank God for His Grace; I had set my face heavenward, and held on. Then God took a darling three-year old daughter from me in four short days! Dear Brother, isn't death horrible, a dread enemy indeed! But thank God for that, too! That opened up the way, and I left the old lifelong associations behind in Cornwall--walked out penniless, no luggage, no coat even, but knowing it was right, even if it meant sleeping in the fields. I didn't look back or I should have turned back.

There is no room for details, though they simply teem with the love and the overruling providence of God. I finally reached London. Within a few weeks I had Vol. I of your STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES sent from the very place and people I had left. They had just got the Truth and appealed to me to read the volume.

I was so hungry for it; it was just what I wanted. The very next Sunday a brother and sister took me to the Tabernacle (London) to hear you, and though I really believe I had given up my will nine months before, I knew the real meaning of consecration during your address, and was one of the first to rise when you gave the invitation to all desiring to symbolize.

That was a year and a half ago. I have indeed had a wonderful and blessed experience; but I do find the Christian warfare a fierce fight. How grateful I am, and how I long to grow more like my Lord and Head each day! I have taken the Vow, believing it one more piece of armor to help withstand the Adversary.

THE WATCH TOWERS come just in time always--just as I need some special help. My little boy prays the evening prayer you suggested, and will shortly learn the morning prayer also.

Don't trouble to answer me personally, my dear Pastor. I shall know you have read, and then rejoiced for one more. You always have my sympathy and prayers. My heart has often gone out to you when you have been passing through particular trials. God bless and keep you.

Your privileged sister in the dear Lord,
ELLEN E. CORMACK.

GREETINGS FROM THE LENS CONVENTION--FRANCE

BELOVED BROTHER AND PASTOR RUSSELL:--

"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed; because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness."--Lamentations 3:22,23.

Our hearts cannot find any expression noble enough and powerful enough to show their adoration toward our Heavenly Father for all His benefits toward us. The Bible is a beautiful Book to us, dear Brother. What a treasure has God put into our hands, and what beautiful things has He not in reservation for us! Therefore, from the bottom of our hearts we can say: "Bless the Lord, O my soul"!

It is understood that our thankfulness ascends also to Him for the means He has established in the Body--toward our

lovable Head and toward the brethren whom He has chosen to impart to us His goodness. The Lord bless you and keep you, as well as the dear class in Brooklyn. Although far away from each other, we are often united at the Throne of Grace, asking our Heavenly Father to pour more and more of His compassion on you and on us in return.

We would have liked to send to you sooner the expression of our sympathy and our love, assuring you of the part we take both in your joys and in your sorrows. Please excuse us that we have waited until the present Convention; it was in order that the 200 brethren and sisters present could join us in an expression of love.

Having had a part in your blessings it is only just that we should share in your tribulations. Truly these tribulations are permitted of God in order to fashion our character to the likeness of that of His dear Son, our beloved King.

AS VALUABLE AS THE GOLD OF OPHIR

I wish that every soul in Christendom and also in heathen lands might have a copy of THE WATCH TOWER of January 15th, 1913, containing an article entitled, "Covenant Relationship with God Essential to Life Everlasting." The article ought to be studied and thoroughly absorbed. Every word is of the value of the Gold of Ophir. Many thanks for sending copy to me.

Very truly yours,

MRS. H. LOUNT.