
CONTENTS

Consecration as Related to Present-Day
 Conditions..... 67
 Progressive Steps of Justification and
 Sanctification..... 67
 Those Consecrating Since 1881..... 67
 The Spirit of Helpfulness..... 69
 Responsibility for Our Influence..... 69
 Re Sunday Observance..... 69
 The End of the Age a Perilous Time..... 70
 Prevalence of These Conditions Universal..... 70
 A Subtle Test..... 71
 Courageous Dealing--Past, Present, Future..... 71
 Bible Brings Spirit of Liberty..... 71
 Church to Judge Courageously in Next Age..... 72
 Profitable Bible Talks..... 72
 God's Great Feast..... 73
 "Jesus Himself Drew Near" 74
 "Naught That I Have, My Own I Call" 76
 Life Rights Lost to Mankind..... 77
 Importance of Attaining Balance of Mind..... 77
 God's Use of Things In Our Hand..... 78
 The Spirit-Begotten in the Holy..... 79

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1914--GENERAL CONVENTION--1914
CLINTON, IOWA--JUNE 28-JULY 5.

It is proposed that the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION shall this year hold an eight-day General Convention at Clinton, Iowa, June 28th to July 5th, and we are thus giving timely notice to permit the friends to arrange their affairs accordingly. Clinton is commended as an ideal convention city. It is reached by several prominent railroads and is quite central to St. Louis, Louisville, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Chicago, Toledo, Detroit, Cleveland, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Madison, Omaha, Kansas City, etc. The large Coliseum which has been secured for our meetings stands near two beautiful parks, along the Mississippi River.

MEMORIAL SUPPER--APRIL TENTH

This year we will celebrate the Memorial Supper on the evening of Friday, April 10th. Further particulars in next issue of THE WATCH TOWER. Also carefully read over again Study XI, pp. 457 to 484, Vol. VI, STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

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BETHEL HYMNS FOR APRIL

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 April follow: (1) 260; (2) 7; (3) 25; (4) 130; (5) 112; (6) 12; (7) 155; (8) 313; (9) 307; (10) 318; (11) 113; (12) 310; (13) 8; (14) 152; (15) 1; (16) 168; (17) 314; (18) 295; (19) Vow; (20) 179; (21) 144; (22) 114; (23) 326; (24) 129; (25) 227; (26) 203; (27) 229; (28) 18; (29) 281; (30) 208.

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R5410 : page 67

CONSECRATION AS RELATED TO PRESENT-DAY CONDITIONS

CONSECRATION is another name for sanctification, and signifies a setting apart. Sanctification, consecration, is intimately related to justification, because, although there is a partial justification when one turns from sin to God, there could not be a full

justification, a justification to life, until such time as the person had made a full consecration. It would appear, then, that from the time when one starts toward God, when he turns away from sin, and seeks to know and to do God's will, there is a certain degree of consecration, setting apart to God, as in contradistinction to following evil. Each step that he takes toward God is a step toward sanctification and toward justification.

Looking back to the picture in the type as illustrative of this, we see that a Levite or a priest when first approaching the Tabernacle, desiring to enter, would discern in the distance the wall of white surrounding the Court. With more or less knowledge of what was inside he would approach it. When he reached the gate, he would see that the Court was a sacred place, and that none would be received in any sense within its enclosure except as he recognized the sacrifice on the brazen altar just inside.

PROGRESSIVE STEPS OF JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

And so with a person who is in a semi-consecrated condition--a semi-justified condition. His first great lesson at the gate of the Court is that he is a sinner, that God accepts not sinners, and that only those who approach Him through recognition of the great Sacrifice will be received. Having recognized the Sacrifice, having trusted in the death of Christ for justification from sin, his next step would be a deeper consecration, and thus a fuller justification. If he proceeds, this would bring him to the brazen laver of the Court, which would represent a washing away of the filth of the flesh--the becoming more and more clean in life, doing all in his power to free himself from sin. This also is acceptable to God.

But still he is neither justified completely nor sanctified

R5411 : page 67

completely. As he presses on, earnestly desiring to come still nearer to God, he comes to the door of the Tabernacle. There he finds that he can go no further except by death--the death of his human will, the surrender of all human rights and interests. He recognizes, further, that this death must be a sacrificial death, and that he needs to be accepted of the High Priest, that the High Priest must make good for his imperfections by the imputation of His merit before the Heavenly Father will accept his full consecration.

His consecration takes place, therefore, before his justification to life. He must present himself in sacrifice before Jesus can accept him, before He can present him to the Father, that he may become one of His members. It is to be a membership in the earthly Body of Christ, for suffering and death, and a membership also in the

spiritual Body, for life and glory. The sealing of his consecration will be the Divine acceptance of that consecration, which is indicated by a begetting of the Holy Spirit. And begetting of the Holy Spirit is indicated by his appreciation of the deep things of God, as represented in the altar of incense and the table of shew-bread; in experiences of chiseling and polishing, and by opportunities to serve. In some cases these various steps are taken almost simultaneously.

After acceptance on the part of God, the consecration must be persisted in, maintained. We must abide in Christ, in order to be sharers in the Royal Priesthood beyond the veil, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. If we in the present time suffer with him, then we shall also reign with Him in glory.

AS TO THOSE CONSECRATING SINCE EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

Some have been concerned as to what evidence, if any, a person consecrating himself since 1881 would have that his consecration had been accepted of God. We would say regarding this that something would depend on how recently the person had made the consecration. If very recently, he would have no sure means of determining. If a year or two had passed, and he had not in the meantime received any evidences of the Holy Spirit's begetting--if he had not received increased ability to understand and appreciate the Truth; if he had not experienced a love for the Truth and a desire to serve it; if he had not found some opportunity for serving the Truth, and some experiences of trial--in such case he would have reason to doubt the Divine acceptance of his consecration.

But in such a case we would be inclined to wonder if the consecration had been properly made. Our thought would be that in one way or another God accepts every consecration, that a broken and contrite heart He will in no way despise. He did not despise those in ancient

R5411 : page 68

times who consecrated their lives to Him--the Prophets and the faithful Israelites of old. They were not despised nor rejected. They found opportunities for service and they had this testimony (Hebrews 11:7), that they pleased God; and they received a special blessing as a reward for their obedience and for all the sacrifices they had made. But this did not mean with them a begetting of the Holy Spirit.

We have every reason at present to believe that the number of the Elect is not yet completed, because of many crowns having been forfeited. We see coming in, day by day and week by week, some who give evidence of the Lord's acceptance, who evidence that the Lord is permitting them to lay down their lives in His service.

But the time will undoubtedly come in the near future when the number of the Elect will be complete. Then only such vacancies as might still occur by some falling out would remain. In that case there might be a number in the consecrated attitude, whom God would accept to take the places of some who would drop out. These would receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and would find opportunities for serving the Truth and for suffering for the Truth's sake.

The evidences seem to be that there are still quite a number of vacancies in the elect number, because there are people coming into Present Truth and consecrating who have come directly from the world. This would seem to indicate that there are not at present a sufficient number fully consecrated to complete the 144,000. If there were, these would be given the preference over those not consecrated.

THE AVERAGE CHRISTIAN'S PRESENT POSITION

It would seem that throughout Christendom we can see today a great many who have taken the steps of consecration to a greater or less degree and more or less intelligently. Some recognize the Redeemer and the necessity for His work of salvation, and the fact that He gave His life as an offset for sin. Some have gone further, and with more or less intelligence have "washed at the laver."

But it seems that the great majority have not gone much further--that they do not see the propriety of going further. The majority of professed Christian people today do not go any further than to live a moral life. They have not reached the point of consecration to God, and hence have not yet reached the point of vital justification. The majority have perhaps gotten to the laver, and are desiring to wash and be clean.

As such come to learn the Message of the Kingdom as it is now going forth--that a full consecration to death is the only condition upon which any may be followers of Jesus--some of them gladly avail themselves of this knowledge and offer. They gladly go forward to the extent of full consecration, full justification; and by reason of their surroundings, and the fact that the majority of professed Christian people in the various denominations are behind them as regards attainment, instead of being ahead of them, these are looked upon as peculiar. The majority do not discern that this peculiarity is the very thing that God requires of those who would be joint-heirs with Christ--of those who would follow in the path of devotion and faithfulness, that they may be accounted worthy of reigning with Christ in His glorious Kingdom.

THE GREAT COMPANY

A class mentioned in the Scriptures as the Great

Company, who will come up out of great tribulation and wash their robes and make them clean in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14), and who will eventually attain to the position of antitypical Levites, is worthy of consideration. These have passed the various stages of full consecration and Divine acceptance and the begetting of the Holy Spirit. They became New Creatures in Christ Jesus and entered into the Holy. But through an insufficiency in the matter of zeal, and a lack of stamina, because of their unfavorable environment in Babylon, these are failing to go on, failing to see that a full sacrifice of earthly things is the only condition upon which they can gain the Heavenly things.

These are seeking to be followers of Christ and followers of Mammon, seeking to please the Lord and to please the world, having some of the Lord's Spirit and some of the spirit of the world, and in general not making progress, and not putting off the things of the flesh --anger, hatred, malice and strife, envy and evil speaking, the works of the flesh and of the Devil, and therefore are not putting on the fruits of the Spirit--faith, fortitude, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, meekness, gentleness, love.

It must be admitted that these have not had the right instructors, and they have gotten wrong conceptions--misunderstandings of the Lord's Word. Nevertheless, we cannot but have faith that God will guide these who are really His children, and will, through suffering, lead them to take a positive stand.

We do not think we should understand the Scriptures to teach that the Great Company will attain to the same degree of spiritual development as the Little Flock. It is true that God has only the standard of perfection for any of His creatures; but there are many who demonstrate by their lives that, if everything were favorable, they would be very loyal to the Lord and very loyal to righteousness. It is merely because the narrow way is so steep, so up-hill and rugged, that they have not the courage to go on. They fail to display that love and zeal which the Lord has set as the mark for participation in the Royal Priesthood.

We believe that the Lord would probably expect no more from the Great Company class than He would expect from the angels--as though He would say of each of these, Doubtless this person, under favorable conditions, would prefer to be My child and to live in harmony with Me, and he would not think of living in sin, and would even suffer death rather than deny My name. If such be the test of the Great Company class, there might be a million who have demonstrated this degree of loyalty in the past, during this Gospel Age. Some of these probably have even suffered martyrdom, when they were put to the final test.

OPPOSITION OVERRULED FOR BLESSING

We think there is good reason to believe that a considerable number who have made consecration are still in Babylon. We do not know this, however. We are near the Battle of Armageddon, near the time of the overthrow of Babylon; and we are seeking to give the Message of the Truth as wide a circulation as possible, to the intent that this class may hear and come out, even though too late to win the great prize. That they are considerable in number is intimated in the 19th Chapter of Revelation, where we are told that when Babylon falls the number of those released at that time will be a great multitude, that the voices of these will be "as the voice of many waters."

We believe that at the present time there are a great

R5412 : page 69

many in the nominal Churches whose minds are gradually becoming more and more awake to the Truth. In various pulpits, where the Truth is opposed, many things of the Gospel of the Kingdom are being proclaimed; and this will have the effect of awakening and informing some of this class. Even though those bringing forward these truths declare them in spite and envy, nevertheless the Message of the Gospel is preached. (Philippians 1:15-18.) Many thus have their attention called to certain truths, which we would never be able to give them --many whom we could not reach.

For instance, some of these ministers mention that we believe the nominal Church to be Babylon; others say that we believe that our Lord is now present, in His Second Advent, and is gathering His jewels (Malachi 3:17); still others are telling that we believe the end of the Gentile Times will come in October, 1914. All these truths are being stated in a slanderous way. But we should not be surprised if the Lord will overrule for the good of His people many of these things.

Not long ago, to our great surprise, a brother told us that his first knowledge of the Truth came to him through a Morehead Tract. Another man heard his preacher say that we were the Anti-Christ. He wanted to see what Anti-Christ looked like, and he came to see and hear us, and got the Truth, just on account of slanderous statements. So we have to be a target, that the Lord's Message may go forth. We are not to think it strange, as though some strange thing happened unto us, that we are caused to be a gazing stock, and pass through fiery trials. Let us rejoice that we are accounted worthy to suffer with Christ, that when His glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy.--1 Peter 4:12-14; Hebrews 10:32,33.

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R5412 : page 69

THE SPIRIT OF HELPFULNESS

"Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification."--Romans 15:2.

THE Apostle Paul does not say in our text, Let the younger ones please their neighbor, nor does he say, Let the older ones please their neighbor; but he says, "Let every one of us please his neighbor." All of the Lord's people should have such an interest in one another and in the Lord's cause, and should have so much of the spirit of the Master, that they would seek rather to sacrifice themselves than to gratify self, especially at the expense of others.

If we have the spirit of the Master, we shall find various ways in which we will sacrifice self without waiting for specific directions. The Law of Love will incite us to act contrary to our own natural preferences, if by so doing we shall help one another in the good way.

In his letter to the Corinthian Church the Apostle illustrates this principle by a practical application re the Greek custom of offering their meat in their temples. After having been thus offered to the idols, the meat was considered to be especially sacred. Thus nearly all of the meat available was offered to idols, so that whenever one wished to have meat he could find none that had not been thus offered.

Those who had come out of idolatry into Christianity, knew that the worship of idols was wrong; for they had learned that there is only the one true God. They also knew that the meat itself had not been hurt by being offered to idols; for an idol is nothing. But they should have been willing to deny themselves meat rather than to injure the conscience of a weak brother who still thought that the meat thus offered was sacred, or who thought that it was contaminated. The Apostle declares that he would abstain altogether from eating meat rather than risk stumbling a brother who could not take the broader, truer view. To stumble such a one, might be to throw him out of the right way entirely.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR INFLUENCE

The Apostle did not say that it is not right to eat meat; but that he was willing to forego his rights and privileges in order to edify another. These others of whom he spoke had not come to appreciate fully the fact that meat offered to idols had not been hurt thereby. To set meat before a piece of stone would not injure it; and so to set it before an idol would not hurt it. But St. Paul could better afford to give up eating meat altogether than to stumble a brother.

The principle is obvious. We should, if necessary, be willing to deny ourselves some of our privileges if this

course would be of any assistance to a brother and would avoid stumbling him. Some of the Lord's people have very sensitive consciences, others are less sensitive. The longer one has been in the School of Christ and the more ability he has, the more easily should he discern what would be pleasing to the Lord. As a Christian, he would not want to do anything to offend the Lord, even if he were to go without meat for the remainder of his life.

But if he could take the position that his own conscience would approve of a certain course, then the question would be, Would he allow his intelligence, his poise of mind, to work injury to a brother? Would he wish to stumble a brother, to make him weak, to lead him to violate his conscience? Or would he wish to lose all his influence for good over his brother? The Apostle answers this suggestion in the negative; he says, When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak consciences, ye sin against Christ. "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."--1 Cor. 8:1-13.

RE SUNDAY OBSERVANCE

Applying the above principle--our responsibility for our influence--to Sunday observance, we are not to feel a bondage, as the Jews did on their Sabbath day. But we should avoid driving tacks or making any unnecessary noises. We should avoid singing or playing on an instrument anything that would not generally be recognized as in keeping with things sacred. We should avoid what would be considered by others as not observing the Sabbath. We should do this for the sake of our influence. To our understanding every day is a part of the great Sabbath into which we have entered--rest in Christ. We have a greater liberty. But we are not to use this liberty to the injury of others.

Many people think that any kind of labor is a violation of the Fourth Commandment. From our viewpoint we know that the Sabbath of the Jew was typical; and we see what the antitype is. We are enjoying the antitype of that Sabbath. But while we might have liberty to work on Sunday, our so doing might stumble our neighbor. We would not be violating any principle in not observing Sunday; but for the sake of not stumbling our neighbor, we are glad to rest from our work and to give ourselves to the study of God's Word.

Christian people generally do not observe Sunday in the way they think they should observe it. The conception of many is that they should observe it as rigidly as

R5412 : page 70

the Jewish Law set forth; and that neither the ox nor the ass, the automobile, the street cars nor the steam cars should be used. Indeed, they would not think it right to go any great distance on the Sabbath.

As a matter of fact, the nominal church of today are not living up to their own conceptions of God's Law. As we get opportunity, we would like to assist these people to get a truer meaning of the Sabbath, that their consciences be not hurt, but be free from uneasiness. Sunday should be a day that is quiet and reverential in every way, and devoted specially to the service of God--a day in which business is restricted, and as far as possible eliminated. But the interests of the Lord's work forbid our always refraining from the use of steam cars, street cars, etc., on Sunday.

Remembering that the word Sabbath signifies rest, as the Apostle used it (Heb. 4:9, margin), we can see that the Church of Christ keeps the Sabbath, or rest, every day, and recognizes God's arrangement in connection with this matter. Those who keep every seventh day as a Sabbath, but who fail to enter into and keep the rest of faith, are not keeping the true Sabbath, but keeping another, so far as the Church is concerned.

The Sabbath arrangement was for the Jews. We have the better arrangement under our Covenant. We enter into rest, our Sabbath, every day; and we are hoping soon to enter into the still Greater Sabbath. In that Sabbath, the Millennium, we shall have not only rest of heart, but also perfection; and we shall then not be beset by the trials and difficulties of life. During His ministry Jesus chose the Sabbath day in which to perform miracles, heal the sick, that He might show forth the kind of works which He will perform during the Great Sabbath Day, the seventh-thousand-year day--the Millennium.

HELPING, NOT HINDERING, OUR NEIGHBORS

We can apply this principle in a general way. We can apply it to our conversation with Christian people. There is a way of taunting people on their ignorance, etc. This is not love; for love does not delight to expose another's weaknesses. The more careful we become in our words and our actions, the more polite we shall be, the more helpful.

"Politeness is to do and say

The kindest thing in the kindest way."

One may be polite for the sake of policy or for the sake of principle. Our pleasing of our neighbors should be for their edification. We should be glad to do all that we can for their assistance, their edification, their uplift, their upbuilding. If we can speak a pleasant word, a kind word, it would be for upbuilding; and we should speak it, instead of speaking an unkind word.

In our desire for the upbuilding of others we are to have in mind primarily the upbuilding of the Lord's people in spiritual things. As the Apostle says, we are

ways of provoking others, and St. Paul shows us the right way. What the Apostle had in mind was the reverse of provoking to anger, hatred and strife. Some of the dear brethren who are evidently very sincere have not caught the spirit of the Truth on this subject; and wherever they go, they are apt to stir up the evil mind of others, instead of stirring up their good mind and provoking to love and good works.

We are to please our neighbors so far as it would be for their good, and according to right principles. But to upbuild one in injustice would not be right. We should not think it right to let our neighbor's chickens run all over our garden; and we think that he would thus be more edified by our firm stand for right. But we must not tell him how to manage his chickens. We must do our best to keep his chickens off our place; but we would make a mistake if we were to go in and order our neighbor's chickens, house and children. To do so would be busyboding. We shall have enough to do to look after the weaknesses of our own family.

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R5413 : page 70

THE END OF THE AGE A PERILOUS TIME

"In the last days perilous times shall come; men shall be traitors, heady,...lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."-- 2 Timothy 3:4.

THE expression, "the last days," or the latter days, the closing days, refers, not to the end of the world in the sense that many expect this event, but is a Scriptural designation of the present time, the end of this Age, when the Reign of Righteousness is about to begin. We are glad to be living now in this Harvest time! "The Harvest is the end of the Age." (Matthew 13:39. --Diaglott.) The warning given by the Apostle is that, instead of the world's being Christianized and converted to God at this time, the reverse condition will prevail. It will be a time of great peril--peril to the Lord's people--peril for those who have started out to follow Christ. However, it will not be so much a perilous time for the world.

The only ones who are on trial for life or death are those who have been released from the Adamic condemnation. To these the time described by St. Paul will be one of severe testing. The whole course of the world will be turned aside from the high standard that might have been expected. Men will be traitors. As long as it will be of advantage to them to perform a contract they will do so; when not advantageous they will not fulfil the contract. It will be a time when every

man's hand will be lifted against his neighbor. Selfishness will be rampant. Each will do what will be to his own interest, regardless of obligation. There will be manifest headiness and selfishness and self-conceit. Men will be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." This condition is to be a sign of the end of the Age.

Every thoughtful person must perceive that this condition of things is prevailing now. Whenever a contract is found to be unsatisfactory--whether it be a marriage contract or a business contract--the dissatisfied contractor is liable to break the agreement. This party to the contract then assumes the attitude of one who declares, Force me to keep it if you can. The Lord's people will keep their word and be firm for principle and true to their contracts, even when these prove disadvantageous to them. This attitude is pleasing to the Lord.

PREVALENCE OF THESE CONDITIONS UNIVERSAL

We find headiness of spirit in the world everywhere --a loss of respect for authority. No doubt there has been too much respect for authority in the past. Now the pendulum is swinging to the other side, and there is no respect for authority. This condition has been brought about by a lack of reverence for God--the inevitable result of loss of faith in the Bible as the Word of God. As people lose faith in the Bible, they lose faith in God, and become more selfish and more self-willed. This condition of affairs has been brought about by false

R5413 : page 71

doctrine, error. People think that God is their Adversary, purposing to do them harm.

The Higher Critics have been seeking to put away what they have considered the absurdities of religious thought, and to this end have done away with the Bible. Bible students see that the absurdities have been brought about by the creeds and not by the Bible. But the world, losing confidence in God, are becoming more heady than ever before. Even the reverential fear which once held them is departing, and there is a disposition to doubt everything. People are in the condition of mind where they say, "Let us eat, drink and be merry"; nobody knows about the future; the preachers are all confused. Everything has come about by evolutionary processes. Let us enjoy the present. Let pleasure be our aim in life. This would seem to be the attitude of the world. They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

WORLDLY SPIRIT IN SOME OF THE CONSECRATED

These conditions of our day make it a perilous time for the Church. Do you ask, Would not the Church, on the contrary, be more than ever led to love God? And would this not guard them and keep them from danger?

We answer that some of God's people are becoming more and more immersed in the world. The spirit of the world surges all around them. With great difficulty could these come to realize that the whole world is astray in their ideas and ways. The tendency of all such is to have the mind of the world, even though they be spirit-begotten.

This worldly spirit, the Apostle suggests, would affect the Church to some extent. Consequently some of the Lord's people would thus come into special peril at this time, because of neglecting their Covenant with the Lord. Others would remember that Covenant, and watch and pray, and so make good progress. Those who are living close to the Lord are, for this reason, developing in mind and heart. But these are few.

The Great Company class, while still loving the Lord, are becoming immersed in the spirit of the world. Even those who are living nearest to the Divine standard will be more or less imperiled through this spirit, unless they continue diligent in prayer and the study of God's Word. What we see going on about us seems natural to our minds. The way in which other people spend time and money is a temptation to the Lord's people which must be steadfastly resisted.

A SUBTLE TEST

The Lord's people spend and are being spent in His service--by volunteer work, by attending meetings, by holding meetings and in various ways, according to opportunity. They are living separate from the world--distinct lives, lives of consecration. The world now has an eight-hour day. The Lord's faithful people would, on the contrary, make theirs a sixteen-hour day. But all these present-day conditions constitute perils. For us to do what others do, and to devote to the Lord's service only what the world considers a reasonable day's work, would not be fulfilling our Covenant of Sacrifice at all. Those who seek merely to do right, and to put in eight hours or so a day faithfully, after the manner of the world, will be judged from this standpoint; and they will merely obtain a place in the Great Company. They are not fulfilling the conditions of the Covenant of sacrifice.

But the Little Flock will serve the Lord with such delight that they will scarcely know how to cease their efforts. They recognize that their bodies are fully consecrated to the Lord, and they are daily putting them to death in a reasonable, rational manner. In view of these perilous times, let us each ask himself the question, To which class do I belong?

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"Deal courageously, and the Lord will be with the good."--2 Chron. 19:11.

THERE is a Divine oversight of the affairs of those who serve God recognized here, and a Divine blessing may be expected eventually upon all who deal justly. All heathen religions, as well as the Christian religion --the religion of the Bible--incline to lead the devotee to expect Divine blessing. But no other religion sets forth, as does the Bible, a just God. No other religions are founded on the principle of Justice. This is one reason why the Bible has had potent influence for liberty. Wherever it has gone, it has been "Liberty enlightening the world."

There is no partiality with the Creator--no class distinction with Him--neither high nor low, rich nor poor, noble nor peasant. It is for this reason that when the teachings of the Lord were before the Israelites they were a liberty-loving people. In proportion as they fell into idolatry, they lost this spirit.

BIBLE BRINGS SPIRIT OF LIBERTY

With the spirit of liberty, of course, will go the spirit of heroism. Therefore the Bible is the source of the valiant qualities of the early Church in their withstanding persecution. Later on, when human traditions and heathen philosophies were heeded instead of the writings of Jesus and the Apostles and Prophets, the spirit of subjection, the spirit of slavery, the spirit of fear, the spirit of ignorance, proportionately prevailed, and brought on the Dark Ages. With the blessed influence

R5414 : page 71

which comes from the Word of God, we see, since the time of the Reformation, the spirit of liberty more manifest. Wherever the Bible has gone, the spirit of liberty has gone. Wherever the Bible has not gone, the spirit of liberty has not prevailed.

Witness, too, the so-called Christian countries where the Bible has been ignored--Russia, Spain, Portugal and large districts of France, Poland, etc. Wherever the Bible is, liberty is more and more manifest. Even where the people do not recognize the Bible, the spirit of its teachings has had its effect. There is something of a realization that all are of one flesh and blood, one common brotherhood. God created of one blood all people that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. (Acts 17:26.) There are, of course, advantages in the way of birth, education, etc. Various circumstances affect conditions. But all mankind are responsible to the Creator, who is the great Judge over all. He is to be looked to

as the One who will give rewards and punishments.

SPECIAL DEALINGS UNDER LAW COVENANT

Our text gives the words of the great king of Judah who became a reformer. He found that various degrees of injustice had crept into the customs of the people under the previous kings. In appointing officers and judges, King Jehoshaphat exhorted them to give their opinion according to the principles of justice. He said, "Deal courageously, and the Lord will be with the good." The Lord would bless those who would be faithful. The Lord would be with the good work that they would do, if they would do it faithfully.

We are to remember that there was a special arrangement

R5414 : page 72

existing between God and the people of Israel. Under that arrangement the Lord was to bless them in proportion as they were loyal to Him and to the principles of His Government. We are not, therefore, to apply these words indiscriminately to other nations, if some in other nations had attempted some kind of reform. God was not undertaking to deal with other nations at that time. He was letting them get a general lesson under their own supervision.

TEXT NOT APPLICABLE TO NATIONS TODAY

God intervened only where it would be injurious to allow certain peoples to carry their evil course any further; as, for instance, in the case of the Ninevites, the Sodomites, and the Amalekites. We could not say that we could apply this text today; and that if some good people were in public office and should deal courageously and put down all the wrong and uplift the right, God would give them success in the work. God is not dealing with the nations at all.

His whole dealing at this time is with the Church. The world today is still doing as it has always done, seeing what it can do for itself. In all probability these reformers today who would deal courageously would bring upon themselves great persecution if they should attempt to interfere with many of the entrenched vices. We have an example of this in New York City at the present time. Entrenched vice is hard to handle. Occasionally the world produces men who handle such things in a noble way. There are noble men inside and outside the Church. But we cannot say that the Lord would be with all of them.

It is a mistake to say that the present governments are under the grace of God. The Bible says that the governments of this time are under the influence of the Prince of this world, and that he has the upper hand at the present time. But when Messiah takes His great

power and reigns, then Satan will be bound. Then all the evil influences will be brought under the control of the Messianic Kingdom. From that time onward, the saints will deal courageously in Messiah's Millennial Kingdom, and shall reign for the purpose of putting down sin, until eventually Christ shall have accomplished the work of causing God's will to be done on earth, even as it is done in Heaven.

CHURCH TO JUDGE COURAGEOUSLY IN NEXT AGE

The point we notice, then, is that our text was applicable to the Jews, because they were a typical people of God. The king of Israel made use of these words to certain ones whom he appointed judges in his day. The Church is now being prepared for the work of judging in the Kingdom. The Lord distinctly tells us that we are not to judge before the time. In the Kingdom we shall judge. Then it will be our business to judge. Then we shall be required to render righteous and courageous judgment, in full accord with the Lord's instructions.

As the Apostle Paul says, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2.) We do know it. Our experiences now are fitting us to judge the world later, that we may do it successfully, courageously, lifting up all mankind who will to the glorious standard of perfection. All the evil doers shall be cut off. Then every knee will bow and every tongue will confess, to the glory of the Father and of the Son.

CHURCH NOW JUDGES ALONG CERTAIN LINES

The Scriptures instruct us that now the Church should judge its members along certain lines. We are not to judge one another's hearts. On the contrary, we are to take one another's word for their heart condition. But we are to judge one another's conduct. If one should live immorally, it would be the duty of the Church to deal with him according to the immorality of his conduct. The Apostle asks, Why should you go to law with the brethren before unbelievers? If you are unprepared to judge yourselves in small matters, how would you ever be prepared to judge in great matters?

In our judging, we are to remember the lines along which the Lord would have us judge. The Lord will be with the good, we may be sure of that fact. But we are to deal kindly, affectionately. "Be kindly affectioned one toward another, with brotherly love." In dealing with one another, in proportion as we lay down hard, inflexible lines of judgment, in that proportion we would be fixing the gauge of the Lord's judgment with us. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." With what allowance we mete out to others, the Lord will judge us. We are to be sympathetic with others, and to remember that all need mercy and forgiveness, even

as we hope for these for ourselves.

Whoever has a duty to perform, let him not fear but be courageous; and if doing unpleasant tasks which are necessary, let us perform them in a kindly manner, both justly and lovingly. Let us not fear man, but rather fear the Lord, and be intent on pleasing Him.

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R5414 : page 72

PROFITABLE TABLE TALKS

--APRIL 5.--LUKE 14:7-24.--

"Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."--Verse 11.

A CONSIDERABLE number of advanced Christian people, Bible students, have in an informal way recently adopted the custom of having Bible talks during the meal hour. We know of many who are finding it profitable. To partake of Heavenly food at the same time that we appropriate the natural is quite proper; the lifting of the mind from the things of the world to the consideration of Heavenly things is advantageous in every way. We see that this was Jesus' custom.

Today's lesson shows the Master a guest at the table of a prominent Pharisee, speaking in a manner that would not be appropriate to any but Himself. In a parable He criticised the gathering guests, because He noted that they selfishly chose the chief seats of honor, and because He would have them see that this selfish spirit would have to do with their character-building and with their fitness or unfitness for the honors of the Kingdom for which they hoped.

When bidden to a public function, they should humbly take very lowly, inconspicuous places, not knowing how many might be more worthy than they in the estimation of the host. Then, if the host noticed them in a very humble place, and so desired, he might ask them forward to a more prominent place. Thus they would be honored and the honor would reach them in a proper manner; whereas, in taking a prominent place uninvited, they at least ran the risk of displeasing the host or the possibility of being asked to take an inferior place, the more honorable one being given to one considered more worthy; and thus they would be, in a measure, disgraced.

R5414 : page 73

The Master declared that this principle held with Him and with the Father; namely, that "whosoever exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth

himself shall be exalted." The Apostles set forth the same proposition, saying, "God resisteth the proud, but showeth His favor to the humble"; "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."--James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:6.

The thought is that the self-seeking, the proud in spirit, could not be trusted by the Lord in a high position. They might do damage to themselves and to His cause, with such a spirit. On the contrary, He will seek those who are of humble mind and who would not be injured by the exaltation, nor in danger of deflecting in the future work to which all of the Kingdom class are called.

Turning to His host, Jesus gave him something of a compliment, saying, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they bid thee again, and recompense be made thee. But call the poor, the

R5415 : page 73

maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just."

The Pharisee had done something of the very kind in inviting Jesus and probably His disciples to dinner. He well knew that they were poor and would be unable to ask him in return. The Master's words may have been comforting to him. At all events, they set forth a grand principle, which should be recognized by all, rich and poor alike. If we get our rewards for good deeds in the present life, how will there be anything coming to us in the future?

Let us therefore follow the Master's instruction and seek to do kindnesses to those who cannot return the favor, assured that God will appreciate such things as done for mercy's sake, for righteousness' sake, and will give a proper reward. We do not understand the Master to mean that it would be wrong to invite friends or neighbors or kinsman who might invite us in turn, but that we are not to think that in so doing we are laying up any treasure in Heaven.

There was more reason for the calling of the poor, the lame, the maimed, in Jesus' day than now. Today, by common consent, civilized people recognize a duty toward the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind. Homes are provided for them out of the public purse, by general taxation. Whoever enters into this matter of paying for the support of the poor in a proper spirit is doing something that in the sight of God is meritorious; but whoever pays such taxes from compulsion merely, without appreciation, evidently would not be deserving of any credit. However, all such institutions should be conducted in such a manner as would afford reasonable comfort and be good enough for ourselves or for our relatives, were we or they the persons in need.

Under such conditions it would be almost wrong to

fail to co-operate with these provisions, to refuse such provisions and to expect private support from friends and relatives, at an additional cost over and above the taxes they pay. Everything in God's Word seems to inculcate the spirit of justice first, and the spirit of love, kindness and sympathy beyond justice. But it should be voluntary and not enforced, and an indication of the measure of the Holy Spirit which we possess.

GOD'S GREAT FEAST

A person at the supper, after hearing Jesus' comments, remarked that it would be a blessed thing to have a share in the great Feast with which the Kingdom of God will be inaugurated. Jesus seized upon this as a text, and preached another sermon in a parable. As usual, His parable-sermon was in respect to the Kingdom of God:

A man made a great supper and bade many guests. When the time for the supper arrived, he sent his servants to inform them, saying, "Come; for all things are now ready." But these with one accord began to make excuse. One said, I have bought a field; I must go and take a look at it; please excuse me. Another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must be proving them; please excuse me. Another said, I have recently married; therefore I cannot come. When the servant returned and told his experience the Master of the house was provoked, and said to the servant, Go out quickly into the streets and the lanes of the city, and bring in the poor, the maimed, the blind and the lame.

The meaning of the parable is not far to seek. God had indeed provided a great Feast. Long years before He had sent word to the Jewish nation that in due time such a great blessing would be open to them--the privilege of becoming members of the Kingdom of God--sharers of it with Messiah. Yet, when Jesus appeared and the time came for the feast to be spread, those who had been bidden were careless.

Jesus and His disciples had been going about for some time declaring that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, and that all who believed should make haste to associate themselves with it--to come to the Feast--should be getting a part of the blessing. But the invited ones were full, covetous, money-lovers. When they heard the Message of the Kingdom they said, I am too busy with my worldly prospects. And so they slighted God's invitation, extended to them through Jesus and the Apostles.

The ones especially invited were the ones who specifically claimed to be the "holiness people"--the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law. In the parable, the rejection of the ones originally invited led to the invitation's being sent to others, in the streets and the lanes of the city. This meant that the poor had the Gospel preached to them. Publicans and sinners were received by our Lord, told about the Kingdom, and invited to leave all

their sinful and injurious practises, to accept forgiveness of sins, and to come in and participate as heirs of God's promise of joint-heirship with Jesus Christ their Redeemer.

Nearly all the preaching of Jesus and of His disciples, up to Pentecost and after, was to the poor of Israel--the publicans and sinners. The charge made against our Lord by the Pharisees who rejected Him was that He received sinners, and that He ate with them.

GREAT FEAST REPRESENTS RICH BLESSINGS

The great Feast of the parable figuratively represents rich blessings of God's providence for the Church--the knowledge of the Truth, justification from sin, the begetting of the Holy Spirit, the privilege of appropriating the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word. All this is the Feast which the Lord has spread for now eighteen hundred years, and to which He has been inviting, or calling, certain ones. First the Pharisees, the "religious lights," representatives of Moses, and secondly the poor, the sinful, the weak, the outcasts of Israel, the Prodigal Son class, were invited.

Some of the latter class came, but not enough to fill the places already provided. In other words, not enough of the Jews were "Israelites indeed," acceptable to God, to fill the foreordained number of the elect Church. Hence the Master sent out His servants the third time, saying

R5415 : page 74

that they should go outside the city, into the highways and hedges, and urge the people to come in, that His House might be filled--not a seat left vacant.

This applies, evidently, to the sending of the Gospel to the Gentiles. For eighteen hundred years the Message has been going up and down through the highways and hedges, calling and inviting, drawing, such as have hearing ears and responsive hearts. In all, they will not be a great company. In all, they will not represent very many of the Lights of the world. The Apostle writes, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble," hath God chosen, but chiefly "the poor of this world, rich in faith," to be heirs of the Kingdom.--1 Corinthians 1:26,27; James 2:5.

Ultimately the full number purposed by the great Householder will have been called, accepted, and found worthy through Christ to have a place at that table--to share in that great Feast. It will be the Nuptial Feast, in honor of the marriage of the Lamb, after His wife hath made herself ready. (Revelation 19:7-9.) At that feast, we are assured, will be a secondary company, not worthy to be of the Bride class. These may be figuratively styled the bridesmaids, the Great Company class; for after the account of the gathering of the Bride we

have the Lord's message to these subsequently delivered from Babylon, saying, "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

You can imagine the honors and joys of that great banquet! The aroma of the good things coming, already reaches us in the anteroom, before we enter the banquet hall. These odors come to us through the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word, assuring us of His faithfulness and of His provision of the things which "eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," but which "God hath provided for them that love Him" supremely.

Those originally bidden will not taste of that supper, though, thank God! Divine provision has arranged for another banquet, which through the Kingdom will be spread for all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples--"a feast of fat things."--Isa. 25:6-8.

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R5415 : page 74

"JESUS HIMSELF DREW NEAR"

--APRIL 12.--LUKE 24:13-35.--

"It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that was raised from the dead."--Romans 8:34.

WE ARE to study today one of the most striking manifestations of Jesus to His disciples after His resurrection. Early in the morning of the day of His resurrection He had appeared to the women who came with spices to embalm His body. They had communicated to St. Peter and St. John that the Lord had been with them. These two most energetic Apostles vied with each other to get to the sepulcher with speed. But they saw merely the empty tomb.

The disciples of Jesus were dazed, perplexed. Although He had told them that He would be crucified, and that He would rise from the dead on the third day, they had not comprehended the teaching. Even after hearing of His resurrection they were seemingly slow to connect it with what He had previously told them.

In the afternoon, two of the company were walking home, discussing their disappointment in Jesus--how, instead of becoming a great king, He had been crucified, and their hopes of associating with Him in dignity and honor had all been dashed. Jesus had been proven a

R5416 : page 74

fraud, to the satisfaction of their rulers. The fact that He was crucified seemed to settle the matter that He

could not have been the Messiah, as He had declared and as they had believed.

THAT JESUS IS STILL FLESH IS UNSUPPOSABLE

While they thus talked, Jesus overtook them. They knew Him not, because of His resurrection change. The Apostle Peter tells us that He was "put to death in flesh, but quickened in spirit." We understand this in the light of the explanation given of the resurrection change of the Church. The Apostle Paul declares: "Sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown an animal body, raised a spirit body." (1 Corinthians 15:42-44.) And, of course, if the Church is to experience such a resurrection change in order to be like her Lord, He must have experienced just such a change.

The same thought is impressed again by the Apostle's statement: "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." The change which the Church is to experience, in order to be fitted for the Kingdom of God is the same change which Jesus experienced when He was raised from the dead, a life-giving Spirit--no longer a man.

Our Lord's title, "the Son of Man," still belongs to Him, just as the title, "the Word of God," the Logos, still belongs to Him. When the Logos was made flesh, the identity was not lost. Respecting our Lord's human experiences, we read: "A body hast Thou prepared Me" --for the suffering of death. (Hebrews 10:5-10.) When He had accomplished that purpose, He no longer had need of human nature; but, as He had foretold His disciples, He ascended up where He was before--to the spirit plane, to the spirit nature, as well as, later on, to Heaven itself.

To assume that Jesus is a fleshly being in Heaven, bearing wounds and scars to all eternity and surrounded by spirit beings on a higher plane than the human, is to suppose that the Father never really exalted Him again to the glory which He had with God before the world was (John 17:5), and is un-supposable. We must bear in mind, therefore, the Scriptures, which show that the Father highly exalted the Redeemer, not only restoring Him to spirit-being, higher than human, but exalting Him "far above angels, principalities, powers and every name that is named."--Phil. 2:9-11; Eph. 1:20-23.

"JESUS SHOWED HIMSELF"

St. Luke declares that Jesus showed Himself alive after His resurrection. (Acts 1:3.) Again he speaks of Him as appearing. The narrative shows both terms are justified by the facts. He appeared and disappeared. He showed Himself to some and not to others, and in every way manifested the fact that some great change had

taken place in Him after those three days. Not only did He appear and show Himself in different forms, in different bodies, unlike each other, but also in different clothing. Then, too, when He suddenly disappeared, the clothing disappeared also.

When we say that Jesus, a spirit Being, materialized, we are not to be understood as in any way sympathizing with the class called Spiritualists, who produce materializations

R5416 : page 75

of the dead. If we desire an illustration, let us go back to the Bible account of how Jesus, when He was the Logos--before His nature was changed from Spirit to human--appeared to Abraham, in company with two angels. We read that the Lord and two angels did eat and talk with Abraham, who knew them not, but "entertained angels unawares" until, eventually, their identity was revealed.

Just so it was with the two disciples en route to Emmaus: The stranger who overtook them sympathetically inquired, Why look and talk so sadly? They opened their hearts to Him, astonished that He did not know. They told of Jesus the Nazarene, a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and they explained to Him how the chief priests and rulers had delivered Him up and crucified Him. They explained that theirs was a double disappointment, in that not only had they lost a Friend, but their hope that He was the Messiah, who would have redeemed Israel, had been crushed. They proceeded to tell Him of the events of that very morning--that some of the women of their company had found the tomb empty and had seen angels, who said that He was alive, etc.

This gave Jesus the opportunity He sought--to explain to His disciples quietly, without any excitement, that the experiences they had had were part of the Divine Plan. He said to them, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken!" He declared that it was necessary that He should thus suffer in order to enter into His glory--that without such suffering He never could be the King of Glory, with power to bless and restore humanity, by and by.-- Acts 3:19-21.

Then He began to point out from the writings of Moses and all the Prophets what God had foretold respecting Messiah's experiences. He probably reminded them of how Isaac had been offered up by Abraham, explaining that Abraham typified the Heavenly Father and Isaac typified Himself; and that the offering, even though not fully carried out, represented the death of Himself as it had taken place, the subsequent life of Isaac representing the resurrection of Jesus, to be with His Father again.

He doubtless told them about the smitten rock, from which gushed the waters--that that rock represented

Himself, who must be smitten in order to give the Water of Life to the dying world. He doubtless told them how Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and explained that the serpent represented sin; and that He, in being crucified, was made to take the place of the sinner, that the sinner might, through faith, be made righteous in God's sight through the Redeemer's sacrifice.

He doubtless explained to them the sacrifice of the Atonement Day, in which the bullock, which died, represented Himself in the flesh; and in which the high priest, who lived, and who entered into the Most Holy and sprinkled the blood for the forgiveness of the people, also represented Himself, a spirit Being, who after resurrection would go into Heaven itself and eventually offer up full sin-atonement on behalf of the world, and would come forth again at His Second Advent to bless those for whom He had died.

"HE OPENED THE SCRIPTURES"

He doubtless explained to them respecting the passover-lamb --that it typified Himself, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We may assume that He proceeded to the Psalms, Isaiah and the other Prophets, explaining all the prophetic passages relating to the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow. No wonder those disciples afterward declared that their hearts had burned within them while He opened to them the Scriptures!

As the early disciples were refreshed by the Message of God's grace and the fulfilment of His promises, so it is sure to be with all the followers of Jesus. The Lord prophetically declared, "My people perish for lack of knowledge." Evidently there can be only a dwarfed Christian life and experience except as the Word of God is understood and assimilated. Hence we have the frequent exhortations of Jesus and the Apostles that the people of God should grow in grace and knowledge, should search the Scriptures, etc. Let those who are cold and indifferent unite with those who are dejected and despondent, in coming to the Master for the "meat in due season." Such surely will not be turned away empty by Him who said, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." And in proportion as they find their hearts also burning within them, as they realize the fulfilment of God's promises in the past, so shall they develop faith in the fulfilment of those promises which relate to the future.

Jesus could have manifested Himself to His disciples otherwise than He did. Instead of appearing as the gardener and as the traveler, etc., in different forms, and then vanishing after communicating with His disciples, He could have done just as He did with Saul of Tarsus, the last one to whom He appeared. As we read, "Last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born before

the time." (1 Corinthians 15:8.) Those begotten of the Holy Spirit now are to be born of the Spirit in the resurrection. Then they will be spirit beings, like the Redeemer, see Him as He is and share His glory. That will be the due time for all of His followers to see Him as He is--not as He was.--1 John 3:2.

But Saul of Tarsus saw Him thus as a spirit Being, "shining above the brightness of the sun" at noonday--saw Him before the time. The effect upon him was disastrous to his eyes, and required a miracle for his recovery of sight. And even then apparently a certain blemish was allowed to be a thorn in his flesh to his dying day, as a reminder of God's great mercy toward him, and to keep him humble in connection with his powerful ministry.--2 Corinthians 12:7.

"THEY KNEW HIM--HE VANISHED"

When the travelers arrived in Emmaus Jesus, after being urged, accepted their hospitality. We have every reason to suppose that if they had not urged, He would not have stopped with them; for "He made as if He would have gone farther." And so it is still; He does not intrude upon His disciples. Rather, He encourages us to recognize our need of Him and to ask, that we may receive, that our joy may be full. So it was with those brethren at Emmaus. They were appreciative of what they had learned. "Never man spake like this Man." If He had ministered to them so much spiritual joy, they would delight in showing Him every courtesy in their power; and perhaps this might give further opportunities for conversation.

And so it was. When they sat down to supper, their guest assumed something of the manner of Jesus; and the way in which He asked a blessing upon the food reminded them, evidently, of Jesus. Their eyes of understanding began to open. Immediately they realized that no one but their own Master could have given them the lessons just enjoyed on the journey. And thus having

R5417 : page 76

fulfilled the purpose of His materialization, He immediately vanished out of their sight--clothes and all--instantaneously.

Their joy was too great to permit them to sleep. They must hasten to carry the good tidings to the other disciples. So they journeyed back to Jerusalem, and there found the others rejoicing in the fact that the Lord had manifested Himself to Simon Peter. Then the two told the story of their experiences; and faith, hope and joy began to grow in all their hearts.

Who cannot see that the Lord's way of manifesting Himself after His resurrection was in every way the best! Had He appeared to many of them, or to all of them, as He appeared to Saul of Tarsus later, they would

have been bewildered, shocked. They would not have been so well able to identify "the light shining above the sun at noonday" with their Master, Jesus. Even if a voice from Heaven had declared the fact of His resurrection, Jesus would not have had the same opportunity of explaining to their minds the prophecies; and they, perturbed and excited, would not so well have been able to receive the instruction.

It should be remembered that out of fewer than ten appearances during the forty days between our Lord's resurrection and ascension, He only twice appeared in a form similar to that which they had seen, and bearing the marks of crucifixion; and that on both of these occasions He appeared while the doors were shut, and later vanished while the doors were still shut, in order that His followers might learn a double lesson:

(1) That He was no longer dead, but alive, resurrected;

(2) That He was no longer flesh, but Spirit--"Now the Lord is that Spirit."

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R5417 : page 76

"NAUGHT THAT I HAVE MY OWN I CALL"

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."--Job 1:21.

ALL that we have should be regarded as a gift from God, whether it be much or little. God's gift to our first parents was a very munificent one--perfection of life. They were made in the image and likeness of God in the flesh--only "a little lower than the angels." Because of disobedience this perfection was forfeited. Obedience was the condition on which Adam would be permitted to remain in the Garden of Eden.

If he was obedient he might live and enjoy it, might fill the earth with posterity and gradually bring the whole world to the blessed conditions which he himself found in the Garden.

It was when Adam sinned that God rejected him from being a son. After that time no man was ever called a son of God until Jesus came. And no man since Jesus has been called a son of God, except those who have come to God through Jesus, and have been accepted by Him. Adam was cast out of his Eden home for the very purpose of bringing upon him the penalty of sin--death. The angel of the Lord drove Adam out. We remember God's expression on this: "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17.) The dying process began at once and continued until completed after 930 years.

Since the penalty of sin was death, it was of God's mercy that He allowed our first parents to live at all after their disobedience. While it was a curse He inflicted on our race when He drove Adam and Eve out of Eden, nevertheless there was a blessing connected with that curse. When God drove them out of the Garden, He said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground whence thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Here was the curse. They were to die by gradual processes.

ALL OUR BLESSINGS OF GOD'S MERCY

Adam and Eve might do all in their power to prolong their lives, but it was not possible for them to live out the full thousand years, which constitute one of the Lord's Days. Adam lived out nearly an entire Day, but

R5418 : page 76

he was gradually going down to the tomb all the while. His mental, moral and physical powers were waning. And so all of his race are a groaning creation.

It was not an unjust sentence, nor an unfair sentence. It is a favor from God that we have life at all. The privilege He gives us of living even a few years is a great boon. And so it is true of all of us, as described by the Prophet Job in relating his experience, that naked came we into the world. We have nothing that is really our own. It is of God's providence that we enjoy the privileges that we have.

It was true of Job that it was of God's permission and mercy that he had his flocks and herds and children. Then fire came down from heaven and burned up his sheep and the attending servants. Enemies killed his camels and oxen and asses, and still other servants. The hurricane came and killed his children. But Job said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" Job had no claim on everlasting life, although he had a hope of it. He realized that all he had possessed belonged to God; they were not his own.

Life and immortality were not brought to light until Jesus came. (2 Tim. 1:10.) The great Message of salvation which before was only hinted at was in due time clearly stated by Jesus. He came to give His life a Ransom-price, to give a life that corresponded to the life that Adam lost. We see the beauty of the whole arrangement, that as by a man came death, by a man also should come the resurrection of the dead. Whereas "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, even so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19)--made free from the death penalty--and ultimately shall have a resurrection.

Those who get the first benefit of this provision in

Christ are the Church. The Apostle says that we are risen with Him to walk in newness of life. And we have faith that God is able to fully complete this resurrection as He has promised. We do not claim that we do not die, which is contrary to all the facts and to the Scriptures. We, on the contrary, admit that we die. But we believe that He who raised up Jesus from the dead will raise us up also by Him. Jesus has effected an atonement for the sins of the whole world, upon the basis of which those who believe now may have reconciliation with God. And by and by the world will have the benefit of Christ's atoning work, and opportunity for reconciliation.

LIFE RIGHTS LOST TO MANKIND

The hope of the Church is that she shall reign with Christ for a thousand years, bind Satan, uplift mankind from sin and pain and death, and, as the Scriptures declare, "wipe away the tears from off all faces." (Isaiah 25:8.) And this is the work of God in that He planned, designed, the whole matter. It is the work of Christ in

R5418 : page 77

that He purchased the race and is the Father's Agent-- who is "the Beginning of the creation of God," "the Beginning, the First-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence," not pre-eminence over the Father, but above all others.--Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:18.

We can see more clearly than did Job, that all our blessings are of God, not of ourselves. We can see more clearly because we are spirit-begotten. We know that we have no rights whatever. All we can do is to call upon God's mercy. But all are not able as yet to hear the Message of mercy. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not."-- 2 Corinthians 4:4.

And so only those whose eyes are especially anointed can see. As Jesus said in His day, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear" (Matt. 13:16.) And so St. Peter confirms the same thought of blindness, respecting those who crucified the Lord: "Brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."--Acts 3:17.

So then from our favored vantage ground we, still more than Job, can take in perfect submission whatever experiences God in His wisdom and love sees fit to allow to come upon us. If we are His children, we are bound to accept all our experiences as being of His providence and order and arrangement.

"Naught that I have my own I call,
I hold it for the Giver;
My heart, my strength, my life, my all
Are His and His forever."

=====

THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTAINING BALANCE OF MIND

"Let all your deeds be done in love."
--1 Corinthians 16:14.--Diaglott.

GOD is the very personification of sympathy and love. As the Scriptures declare, "God is Love." And all who will be God's children, developed in His likeness, will be loving children. As St. John says, "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John 4:16.) In proportion as we develop strength of character as New Creatures, this quality of love increases. In addition, we should find our judgment also becoming more accurate. Those who are developed in the Spirit of the Lord have better judgment than they formerly had. As the days go by, they know better how to sympathize with the world; how to deal with mankind; they are getting more and more of the wisdom which cometh from above.

CAREFUL PREPARATION FOR KINGDOM NECESSARY

Before we became Christians at all, we may have been under-balanced, or over-balanced--we may not have known how to deal properly with our families or our friends. Out of kindness and sympathy we may have been inclined to give them money, or to yield to their wishes in a way that was injurious to them; or we may have been too severe and unyielding. But as we grow in the spirit of a sound mind, we learn better how to deal with others, so as to be in harmony with the Divine will, the Divine Spirit.

When we shall have experienced our change and have become like our Redeemer, all of our powers will be perfect. Our love, our conception of justice, and also our conception of how to deal with others, will then be perfect. Every one who does not develop this character of love, mercy, justice, etc., will be unprepared for the Kingdom work.

The next Age is to be a time of purification, of purgation, to the world; and those of the Lord's people who do not now have character enough to give necessary stripes are not worthy of a position in which authority must be exercised. On the other hand, those who would give too many stripes would not be fit to deal with mankind. Therefore we all need this balance of mind in order to be ready for the work of the next Age.

PROPER AND IMPROPER OCCASIONS FOR ANGER

As we come to see that the whole race of Adam is

fallen--some more, some less--we develop a broad sympathy for mankind. We grow compassionate. We desire to lift them up out of their degradation. We would like to help them as much as opportunity affords. Hence we are far from wishing to render evil for evil. We wish to be peacemakers as far as possible. Therefore, unless it would be injustice to refrain from speaking sharply, we should be careful that our words are kind and loving. However, even though our words might not be angry, there are times when sharp utterances might be helpful, but even these should be tempered with love; tempered with the spirit of the Master.

"BE YE ANGRY AND SIN NOT"

There is a difference between anger that would be righteous indignation and anger that would be unloving, unkind, unjust. We know that God is angry with the wicked, for the Scriptures so tell us. (Psalm 7:11.) This fact shows us that anger of itself does not necessarily imply a sinful condition; for God has no sin, and He judges Himself by the same regulations under which He judges His creatures. Therefore anger in itself is not sin.

In God's case there is no danger that He will make a mistake and be angry with the right or approve the wrong, or that He will be lenient with the wrong and thus oppose the right. His knowledge is perfect; therefore His conduct is perfect. In our case, however, if we feel that anger is proper for us, we should use a great deal of discretion. As the Apostle Paul says; "Be ye angry and sin not."--Ephesians 4:26.

In a case where an innocent person is suffering wrong, and we have full knowledge of the matter, then it might be our duty to manifest anger, righteous indignation. It would be proper to manifest a certain degree of anger if we saw even a dumb brute mistreated. If we saw the principles of righteousness being outraged, it might become necessary to manifest some anger, some indignation.

But these cases would probably be very rare, for the circumstances would not often be a matter of our business. As St. Peter remarks, we are none of us to suffer as busybodies in other men's affairs.--1 Peter 4:15.

If we see a parent doing to his child something that is not right, we should not interfere unless the child's life is endangered. If it is merely a case of switching or a box on the ear, we must not interfere. It is not our business. Let us as the Lord's children, ambassadors of the King of Heaven, seek more and more to exercise the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of love and reasonableness.

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GOD'S USE OF THINGS IN OUR HAND

"And the Lord said unto Moses,
What is that in thine hand?"--Exodus 4:2.

MOSES had been called of the Lord to the great and honorable work of delivering His people from the bondage of Egypt. He was now eighty years of age. His long experience in the Egyptian court had given him an insight into the affairs of government. Stephen tells us (Acts 7:22) that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in word and in deed." Tradition says that he was also an able general in the Egyptian army.

Yet he relinquished all these earthly advantages to cast in his lot with the despised people of God. (Heb. 11:24-26.) "Moses...refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward"--he preferred to share with God's chosen people, Israel, in their affliction, and to have part with them in the Promise made to their fathers.

How appropriate it was that the man whom God called to be the leader of Israel out of bondage should be a learned man, and one well equipped to be at the head of such a people and under such circumstances! We cannot doubt that his wandering as a shepherd in the wilderness for forty years, tending the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law, made him thoroughly familiar with every road, every hill, every stream; and that this was subsequently of great advantage to him, when, under the Lord's direction, he became leader of Israel through this wilderness en route to Canaan.

MEEKNESS TAUGHT BY EXPERIENCE

But this forty years' experience in Midian had taught Moses another important lesson--the lesson of meekness. And his long isolation had made him reserved. Furthermore, soon after severing his connection with the royal

R5419 : page 78

house of Egypt, he had made an attempt to deliver his people; but they had not wished his services, and had rather resented his interference. So now, when the Lord would send him to do this great work, he was distrustful of his ability to lead the people of Israel out of bondage into the land of Canaan, and was fearful and reluctant.

The Lord had appeared to Moses in the burning bush which was not consumed, had given him his commission, and had assured him that He, Jehovah, would certainly be

with him. Moses, however, very properly felt the magnitude of the undertaking and his own insufficiency. He urged that he was incompetent, that it would require some one more powerful than he to influence the heart of the king of Egypt. He knew that it would be entirely contrary to the purpose and policy of the Egyptians to let the Israelites go from their service. He said to the Lord, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" But the Lord assured him that He would Himself be responsible; that He would direct in the matter.

"WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND?"

Still Moses wanted some demonstration of God's approval and power. He asked, How shall I make Israel know that Thou hast sent me? for they will not believe. Then the Lord asked, "What is that in thine hand?" Moses answered, "A rod." And the Lord said to him, "Cast it upon the ground." Moses did so, and the rod became a serpent, and Moses fled from it. If he had not particularly noticed what he had in his hand, he might have thought that possibly it had been a serpent before. But he had looked, and was sure that it was a staff which had been changed into a serpent. Then God told him to take up the serpent by the tail. He did so, and it again became a rod in his hand.

THE LESSONS FOR US

From this we would take the lesson that if the Lord sends us on any mission, we should not have the feeling that we could conquer the world, but should realize our own littleness and should properly feel wholly insufficient of ourselves. We should realize that without His assisting grace we could accomplish nothing. We should be very sure that He has commissioned us, and that our mission is not some foolish thought of our own. We should be very sure that the Lord is back of the whole arrangement. Then we should have full confidence in Him.

We should feel like saying with Moses, "I cannot do anything." But if we wish to serve the Lord, we are to look to what we have in our hands, whether it be one talent or another. God is so wise that He can use our humblest talent to His praise. What He wants us to use may be right in our hands, and we may not have noticed it. No matter how ordinary our lives may be, God is able to use us, and to give us also the needed lessons in connection with our experiences.

Another lesson that we could draw from the Lord's dealings with Moses is that the things which we have in our hand, those things closest to us, might become injurious to us, if it were not that the power of God is able to make everything work together for our good. If we have the spirit of service, the Lord can and will use things right at our hand--not necessarily things afar from

us; and the Divine power over evil can make all things work out good to those who love Him. More and more we are learning these lessons. If, then, we would serve, we should look to see what we have in our possession; what things we can make use of.

FAITHFUL IN LEAST--FAITHFUL IN MUCH

A great many people would like to serve the Lord with a thousand tongues. If they had a thousand tongues, they feel sure they would sing with them all. How do we know that we would use a thousand tongues, if we do not faithfully use the one we have? "He that is faithful in that which is least" will be faithful in the greater things.

There are plenty of people who like to address thousands. But if we cannot address thousands, it is all the more necessary to address one. Some say that if they had a million of dollars they would give it to the Lord. But the Lord is not likely to ever give them the chance of giving large sums if they do not manifest a disposition to give of the small amounts already in their possession. "To him that hath [through use of his talents] shall be given,...and from him that hath not [from neglect of his talent] shall be taken away even that which he hath."

So the lesson to us of Moses' experiences would seem to be--the use of things we have in our hands. The same lesson is taught in another way in the case of the poor widow who cried to the Prophet Elisha for help. She was in poverty, and her creditors were about to take her two sons for debt. "What hast thou in the house?" asked Elisha. The woman replied, "Not anything in the house save a pot of oil." Then the Prophet told her to go and borrow empty vessels from her neighbors--"not a few"--and to then begin to pour out the oil into the vessels. The woman obeyed, and all the vessels were filled with oil, and she had oil to sell and thus pay her debt. The Lord used what she had in her hand.

R5419 : page 79

It was the same way with the Lord's miracle in feeding the thousands. He asked, What have you on hand? He did not say, How far is it to town? And He did not tell the Apostles to get wagons and go to town for bread and meat. But He said, Use what you have. And He blessed the five loaves of bread and the two small fishes, to the abundant feeding of the five thousand; they all ate "as much as they would," and of what remained the disciples gathered up twelve baskets full. (John 6:5-13.) So we should use all our talents and opportunities. The Lord is looking for us to use what we have, and we shall receive blessing therefrom; and the more faithful we are in the performance of our privileges, the greater will be our blessings from Him.

MOSES' EXPERIENCES TYPICAL

In addition to the lessons just noted, we believe there is a further significance in the experiences of Moses, and the deliverance of Israel. We are to see something representative of conditions in our day. Moses was acting under Divine instruction. Many things connected with this mission of Moses to the Israelites seem typical of the deliverance of God's people from the power of evil. Pharaoh was typical of Satan. We are living in the corresponding time, when God purposes to deliver all from the power of Satan. Jesus and the Church will be the Agent of Jehovah--the deliverance will be the work of Messiah as God's Representative.

The rod represents authority. This was illustrated at the time when the Lord instructed that Aaron should represent Him as the head of the tribe of Levi. There had been murmurings in Israel, and the principal men of the twelve tribes were instructed by the Lord through Moses to take each man his rod, write upon it his name and send it into the Tabernacle. (Num. 17:1-9.) Aaron's rod was to go in with the others, because it was the rod of his father's family. And when they examined the rods in the morning, Aaron's rod had budded, blossomed and brought forth almonds.

This would give us to understand that a rod might generally be considered to represent authority. As the hand is power, so the rod is authority. Thus the rod would seem to be a special manifestation of Divine Power and Rule. We may not speak too positively of the antitypical fulfilment of this experience of Moses. But we might think that in some way or other the power of God would appear to be evil--the serpent was evil. Evil has seemed to triumph for these six thousand years. When Moses and Aaron went into the presence of Pharaoh, Moses' rod became a serpent there also. Then the magicians cast down their rods, and they became serpents. But Moses' rod swallowed up all the rods of the magicians.

RESUMING THE ROD OF POWER

We would very much like to know just what these things signify--just how God will permit the world under the power of Satan to have an hour of triumph. There is to be permitted a great Time of Trouble, and it will be because of the casting down, for a time, of Divine authority and rule.

We think this condition is present now. People are losing confidence in God. They are feeling, for the time, as though there were no God. The tendency of Higher Criticism and Evolution is to give humanity the impression that there is no God but Nature. And as mankind get this idea of a Nature-god that is ruthless, relentless, impersonal, it is very likely to efface all thought of a living God of Justice and Love. "There is no fear of God before their eyes," the Scriptures say. So we

may expect a great Time of Trouble, when the power of God will seem to be a further manifestation of evil--as the power of evil. The taking up of the rod of power again, a little later, will be the resuming of Divine authority.

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R5418 : page 79

THE SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN IN THE HOLY

OUR ears and our tongue bring us many blessings and in general are grand servants. Nevertheless, sometimes they are difficult so to manage as not to be misleading. Fully half the difficulties everywhere are, apparently, the results of misunderstanding. God has been misunderstood, the Bible is misunderstood and preaching is misunderstood. We cannot wonder, then, that **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** and **TABERNACLE SHADOWS** and **THE WATCH TOWER** have been misunderstood. All that we can do is to restate matters afresh, hoping that our tongue or pen will serve us better, or that the eyes and the ears of our readers will serve them better.

BEGOTTING THE TRANSFORMING POWER

Repeatedly we have endeavored to show that the begetting of the Holy Spirit, in the case of each individual Christian, is the transforming power by which he passes from the human nature to the new nature. This transfer is beautifully pictured in the Tabernacle types by the priest passing from the Court into the Holy. The Court represents, in the present time, the earthly condition of those who are approaching God, but have not yet made a full consecration of their lives to Him and His service.

When the step of consecration is taken, Jesus, acting as our great High Priest, imputes His merit to cover our deficiencies of the flesh, and forthwith presents us to the Father. Our consecration of the earthly nature is thus made acceptable, and in the Divine reckoning we are from that moment dead according to the flesh, but alive according to the spirit--begotten again, not with corruptible seed, but by the Spirit of God. All thus begotten are in the Holy in their relationship to God--that is to say, they are children of God, heirs of God. Thereafter they have the enlightenment of the Truth as represented by the Golden Lamp-stand with the seven burners; the spiritual food as represented in the Table of Shewbread, and the privileges of worship and prayer as represented in the Incense Altar.

This condition continues until the end of this Age, when a judgment, or testing, or distinction, will be made

as between the most faithful, the Little Flock, the Royal Priesthood class, and the less faithful class of the Great Company--the latter thereafter being typed by the tribe of Levi.

In the new order of things, after the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom, this distinction between the Church proper, joint-heirs with Christ, and the larger company of antitypical Levites, will be perpetual, and the services of the two will be different. The former will be a Priesthood corresponding to that of Melchizedek--a Priest upon His Throne. The work of the latter will correspond more to that accomplished by the Levites; namely, teaching the people, etc., as servants of the Priests, from whom they will receive their directions.

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page 81

VOL. XXXV MARCH 15 No. 5
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CONTENTS

The Memorial Supper April 10th.....	83
Eating and Drinking It Worthily.....	83
"Are Ye Able?".....	84
Are We Willing to Share His Ignominy?.....	85
Drinking the Lord's Cup by the Church.....	85
Love and Loyalty Manifested by Submission.....	85
Our Reasonable Service.....	86
The Terms of Discipleship.....	86
Consecration Not the End of Our Work.....	87
The Completeness of Our Offering.....	88
Let Us Go On "In Full Assurance of Faith"!.....	88
Cost of Discipleship.....	90
Definition of Cross-Bearing.....	91
Salt is Good, But--.....	92
Heavenly Interest in Sinners.....	92
The Value of a Man.....	93
Interesting Questions.....	94
Some Interesting Letters.....	95
I.B.S.A. Berean Studies--Vol. II.....	95

page 82

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R5420 : page 83

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER APRIL TENTH

WE WILL celebrate the Memorial Supper on the evening of Friday, April 10. We trust that all of the Lord's consecrated people everywhere will avail themselves of their privilege of memorializing the death of the Redeemer for our sins and--as the Apostle points out--our participation with the Redeemer in His sufferings and death to human conditions. As our Lord and the Apostles met and symbolized His death in advance of the event, so it is appropriate for us to meet on the anniversary to celebrate His sacrifice.

The doing of this annually, in harmony with the evident purpose of the Lord in establishing this Memorial instead of the Jewish Passover, makes the occasion a very impressive one, much more so than any celebration which ignores the anniversary feature and celebrates occasionally --monthly, weekly, quarterly, etc. Let us not find fault with others who do differently; but, as opportunity offers, let us inform them of our reasons for observing this great event on its anniversary.

As often as we do this (yearly) we do show forth the Lord's death until He come. While we believe that our Lord has been present for a number of years--during the Harvest--this does not hinder us from continuing the blessed Memorial of His death. Our thought is that our Lord meant that we were to continue celebrating His death until, at His Second Coming, the full Harvest work of the Age shall be completed, and the entire Body of Christ, the Church, shall be received into glory. Then, as He declared, we shall drink of the New Cup with Him.

Whereas now we drink of His Cup of suffering, shame, ignominy, reproach, the world's derision and opposition, His New Cup will be a Cup of joy, blessing, glory, honor, immortality--the Divine nature. The Father, who poured for our Lord the Cup of suffering, has already poured for Him the Cup of blessing and glory. As we are privileged to share with Him in this Cup of suffering, so with our resurrection "change" we shall be privileged to share with Him the Cup of glory and blessing. Yea, ours is a mingled Cup now, a bitter-sweet; for by faith we already enjoy many of the things which He has in reservation for them that love Him.

In the Lord's arrangement the moon symbolized the Jewish prospects, while the sun symbolized the prospects of the Gospel Age. The Law Dispensation was a shadow,

or reflection, of the things future, as the moon's light is the reflection of the rays of the sun. We are near the time of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His beams, to flood the world with the light of the knowledge of God. Seeing this, we lift up our heads and rejoice, as the Master directed. Since all the overcoming members of the Church are included in that Sun of Righteousness, according to our Lord's parable (Matthew 13:43), it follows that the Elect Church must all be gathered, and her glorification must be completed before the full light of the Millennial glory will shine forth upon the world.

In partaking of the Memorial we may look forward with the eye of faith to the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, in contrast with the conditions which prevailed at the time when the first Memorial was observed. Then, the Moon (the Law Covenant) was at its full; and immediately after the rejection of Jesus and His crucifixion the Jewish polity began to wane. It is worthy of note that the very day on which Jesus was crucified the moon was at its full, and the waning began at once. So this year, on April 11, the moon will be at its very full, and will then begin its wane. The 11th, therefore, corresponds to the day on which our Lord was crucified; and the evening of the 10th corresponds to the night of the first Memorial Supper.

EATING AND DRINKING IT WORTHILY

As from the intelligent appreciation of the fact symbolized by the Memorial Supper a great blessing comes, and a joy proportionate to the participator's faith and obedience, so also a condemnation attaches to an unworthy, improper participation in the Memorial. None are to participate except those who have come into relationship with the Lord by consecration of their hearts--their all--to Him and His service.

None can come into this consecrated condition except as they have recognized themselves as sinners and the Savior as the Redeemer from sin, whose merit is sufficient to compensate for the defects of all those who would come unto the Father through Him. All such should partake with a great deal of joy. Remembering the sufferings of the Master, they are to rejoice in those sufferings and in the blessings that these have brought to their hearts and lives. None are to drink of the fruit of the vine on such occasions except those who have appropriated the merit of the sacrifice of Christ and who fully realize that all their blessings are through Him. None are to drink of the Cup except those who have given up their all to the Lord, for this is what the Cup signifies--it is the Cup of suffering, the Cup of death--a full submission

R5420 : page 84

to the will of God. "Thy will, O God, not Mine,

be done," was the prayer of the Master, and is to be the sentiment and petition of those who partake of the Memorial Supper.

For others to participate in this Memorial Supper would be a farce, would be wrong, and would bring more or less of condemnation, disapproval, from God and from their own consciences--and that in proportion as they realized the impropriety of their course.

But let none think that they should remain away from the Memorial because of imperfections of the flesh. This is a great stumbling-block to many. So long as we are in the flesh, imperfection of word, deed and thought are possible --yea, unavoidable. St. Paul says that we cannot do the things that we would. It is because we need Divine grace to forgive our daily, unintentional, unwilling trespasses that all whose sins have been forgiven and who have been accepted into fellowship with Christ are encouraged to come to the Throne of Heavenly Grace in prayer. The Apostle says, "Let us come with courage to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16.) It was because of our needs that God opened up the way and made this arrangement for us.

By God's provision for the forgiveness of our sins, of which we have repented, and for which we have asked forgiveness in Jesus' name, we may realize ourselves as no longer sinners under condemnation, but as clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness. This is the thought behind St. Paul's expression, which applies to every day: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."--Romans 12:1.

All Christians should keep their accounts squared with the Lord. If they come short, they should lose no time in getting the account squared, in obtaining forgiveness through the merit of the Savior's sacrifice. Such accounts with the Lord should be settled promptly at the time of their occurrence, or not later than the day of their occurrence. They should not be allowed to accumulate; for they will rise as a wall between the soul and the Heavenly Father. But whatever has been the condition in the past, the Memorial season, above all others, is the time for making sure that no cloud remains between the Lord and us, to hide us from His eyes.

Thus forgiven, thus cleansed of any defiling spot on our robe of Christ's righteousness, let us keep the feast --the Memorial of our Lord's death. In it let us afresh acknowledge and impress upon our minds the importance of the merit of His sacrifice and death, and how it represents the grace of God to us, as it will by and by represent the same grace extending through the Millennial Kingdom to the whole world. Let us remember also our devotion of ourselves, our consecration to be dead with our Lord, to be broken as members of His Body, parts of the One Loaf, and to participate in the drinking of His

Cup of suffering and shame and death. "For if we suffer [with Him], we shall also reign with Him."-- 2 Timothy 2:12.

We trust that the celebration of the Memorial this year may be a very deeply impressive one, an occasion of rich blessing to all of the Lord's consecrated people everywhere. "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast."--1 Cor. 5:7,8.

We trust that each little class, or group, of Bible students celebrating the Memorial together will appoint one of their number a secretary to write a post-card to THE WATCH TOWER office, stating briefly the interesting facts connected with the celebration, the number present, and the number participating, so far as can reasonably be estimated.

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R5421 : page 84

"ARE YE ABLE?"

"Are ye able to drink of the Cup that I shall drink of?"--Matthew 20:22.

WE RECALL the circumstances under which these words were uttered by our Savior: It was just a few days before His crucifixion Jesus had promised His disciples that they should sit with Him in His Throne in His Kingdom. So confident were they that this would be as the Lord had said that they were discussing the position they might occupy. The mother of the two disciples, James and John, came to Him and asked whether her two sons might sit, the one on His right hand and the other on His left, in the Kingdom. And Jesus, turning to the two disciples, replied by asking them: "Are ye able to drink of the Cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

We know that Jesus' baptism in water took place at the beginning of His ministry. In harmony with the Divine Plan, He was to die as the Savior of men. And He symbolized this death as soon as He was thirty years of age--as soon as was possible under the Law. During the three and a half years of His ministry, He was accomplishing this baptism, He was pouring out His soul unto death, and this death He finished at Calvary. Jesus said, "The baptism that I am [being] baptized with" --now--not a baptism which was either future or past.

But He spoke differently of the Cup--"the Cup that I shall drink of." He thus implied that the Cup was future--not in the present nor in the past. He had told His disciples that He would go up to Jerusalem; and that there He would be crucified, and on the third day He would rise again. And He said on another occasion,

"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." What the Master said about His being crucified the disciples did not understand. But Jesus understood the situation, and He knew that this Cup was about to be poured for Him. And so He spoke of it again, saying of Himself, "The Cup that My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?"

OUR LORD'S SPECIAL TRIAL

We might think of the word, Cup as representing various experiences of life--that everybody has his Cup of mingled joy and sorrow. But Jesus used the word in a different sense. When He was in the Garden of Gethsemane He prayed, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from Me! Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." And again, the same night He prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this Cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done!" In the matter of His baptism into death, there was no hesitation on our Lord's part. On the contrary, from the very beginning He voluntarily participated in it. The ignominious death was the thing that He prayed might pass, if it were possible. But this was what He learned was the Father's will for Him, and He was content to have it so.

There was nothing in the Law to indicate that our Lord should be executed as a blasphemer of the Divine Law. Yet blasphemy was the charge preferred against Him. The Sanhedrin decided that He was a blasphemer

R5421 : page 85

in that He had said, "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it again," and also in claiming that He was the Son of God. Apparently, then, the thing which was specially weighing on His mind and from which He would have liked to be relieved was the ignominy and shame of being crucified as a criminal, as a blasphemer of the Father He loved so well.

Jesus knew that He had come into the world to die, and that He must suffer. But this part of His experience He had not fully understood. Evidently He knew that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up"; for comparatively early in His ministry He had stated this in His conversation with Nicodemus. But as He came down nearer and nearer to the time of His humiliation, His degradation, and realized all that it meant, He felt a great shrinking from it and poured out His heart in the cry, "If it be possible, let this Cup pass from Me!" But immediately--proving that His affirmation, at the time of His consecration, "Lo I come to do Thy will, O God," was not empty words--He added, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt!"--Matthew 26:39.

ARE WE WILLING TO SHARE HIS IGNOMINY?

And so to His disciples our Savior said: Are you able to lay down your lives completely, even though this shall mean to you injustice in the taking away of your lives? Are ye able to drink of the Cup that I shall drink of? There will be disgrace and ignominy connected with it all. Are ye willing to share with Me in this, My Cup? They answered: "We are able." They were willing.

This, we see, is the same Cup represented in the Communion Service. The bread represents the body and the wine the blood of our Lord. The Cup especially represented the shame and ignominy connected with His death; and the two disciples said that they were willing to share His Cup--they had no hesitancy. At any cost they would be faithful. They would comply with any conditions He would make. They did not, of course, yet know the full import of the word baptism or of the word cup. These were things all His disciples were feeling after. When Pentecost should come, these things that Jesus had spoken to them would come to their remembrance, as He had foretold. (John 16:4; 13:19.) But they were willing and anxious. And that is all that we can be. Jesus guaranteed that, being willing, they should have these experiences; that, continuing willing, continuing to suffer with Him here, they should reign with Him in His Throne. But as to the particular place for each in the Throne, that would not be for Him to say, but for the Father.

The courage, the fortitude, of our dear Redeemer in walking the narrow way fills us with admiration. How strong and brave was His character! He had no thought of looking back; His whole being was intent upon accomplishing the will of His Father in Heaven--upon sacrificing Himself in the interest of the world. What a noble Example was set before the Apostles!--greatness in humility, victory through entire self-surrender!

DRINKING OF THE LORD'S CUP BY THE CHURCH

The drinking of the Lord's Cup by the Church, represents our participation in the sufferings of Christ in the present time. None shall be a member of the Body of the great Mediator of the New Covenant unless he come in now under the proper terms. The drinking of the blood, then, is the sharing of the Cup. For if we drink not of His Cup, neither shall we share with Him in His glory. He said, "Drink ye all of it." All must drink, and the entire Cup must be drained during this Age.

It is a very great privilege that we are permitted to have a share in the sufferings of Christ. "If we suffer [with Him], we shall also reign with Him." We shall participate in the inauguration of the New Dispensation, and in dispensing its blessings. The Antitype of Moses, who will do the sprinkling, is Christ the Head and the Church His Body, glorified, of whom we read in Acts 3:22: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your

brethren, like unto me"--that is, Moses was His type, on a smaller scale. The Body is now being raised up. Jesus was first raised up, then all the Apostles; and following after, the remaining members of His Body.

As Moses sprinkled all the people, so this antitypical Moses, when completed, will "sprinkle" the world of mankind; and this will mean the bringing of them into harmony with the Divine Law. It will require the thousand years to "sprinkle" mankind. So there is a great difference between the drinking of the Cup and the sprinkling of the blood. The sprinkling with the blood represents justification, while the drinking of the Cup by the Church represents, not only justification, but sanctification.

OUR LORD'S RECOGNITION OF THE DIVINE PURPOSES

Our Lord, in His memorable words to St. Peter--"The Cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"--referred, evidently, to His dying experiences, which were severe in the extreme. He was dishonored of men and reckoned as an enemy of God--a blasphemer. His physical sufferings He knew would be intense, but to His perfect mind the shame and desisted, the opprobrium, added greatly to the poignancy of His anguish. Yet this was the Cup the Father had given Him; it was the Divine purpose respecting Him.

Our Lord had all the experiences necessary for proving and testing His loyalty; for it was necessary that He manifest His loyalty before both angels and men. The whole matter had been Divinely arranged from before the creation of man. He was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8.) Everything pertaining to that slain Lamb was foreknown by the Father. Jesus was to drink the Cup which belonged to the sinner, in order that He might redeem man and might thus be a faithful and merciful High Priest. This was the Cup of suffering and death. It was necessary that Jesus should suffer the death of the cross, in order that He might redeem the Jew.

LOVE AND LOYALTY MANIFESTED BY SUBMISSION

All His sufferings were foretold in the Scriptures. The crucifixion was pictured by the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness. All of His experiences were foreknown, forearranged and necessary. When He came to earth to do the Father's will, He did not know of all that was to come. But He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, the things which were "written in the Book." He submitted Himself to all the Father's will, and thus He proved His loyalty. As He Himself declared, "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of My Father which sent Me!" As the hour of the consummation of His sacrifice drew near, in the lonely shades of Gethsemane, the Master prayed, "My Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from Me!" We are not to

suppose that He prayed for the Cup of death to pass away; but He wondered whether or not the ignominious experiences of the crucifixion might pass. Yet we find that He did not murmur nor rebel, but said, "Not My will, but Thine, be done!"

SPECIAL SUPERVISION OF OUR CUP

We see that our beloved Lord drank of the bitter Cup to its dregs, and did so thankfully. And we are to remember

R5422 : page 86

that He gave the Cup to us, that we should all drink of it--not that we should all have exactly the same experiences that He had, but that we must all drink of the Cup of suffering and death in the Father's own way. Jesus was the Perfect One, and the Father dealt with Him in a very particular manner.

In our cases the experiences would be different; because of our imperfection we could not be dealt with from the standpoint of perfection. We are, therefore, not to think of our Cup as a definite, fixed program as was the Master's, but rather that the Father permitted us to have a share in the Cup of death with His Son. Our Cup is supervised by our Savior, although it is the Cup poured by the Father; for it is the Father's Program.

In the Master's case the Cup was necessary for the sins of the whole world. In our case it is not necessary, but it has pleased the Father to grant us a share in the sufferings and glory of our Lord. Jesus makes good our deficiencies and develops our characters, fashioning us into His own glorious Image. Without this supervision of our Cup by our Lord, we might be very poorly developed in many qualities; therefore our Cup needs to be specially supervised. And so He assures us that, while the necessary experiences are coming to us, at the same time His grace will be sufficient; and His strength will be made perfect in our weakness, and all things will be made to work together for our good.

Let us never forget that unless we partake of His Cup, unless we are immersed into death with Him, we can have no share in His Kingdom of glory, we can never sit with Him in His Throne. Let us then count all the things of this earth as loss and dross that we may attain this Pearl of Great Price. As the experiences of suffering come to us, let us not be affrighted, nor "think it strange concerning the fiery trials that shall try us, as though some strange thing happened unto us"; for even "hereunto were we called," to suffer with our beloved Master now, and by and by be glorified together with Him in the Kingdom eternal!

"Are ye able to walk in the narrow, strait way,
With no friend by your side, and no arm for your stay?
Can ye bravely go on through the darkening night?"

Can ye patiently wait till the Lord sends the light?

"Ah, if thus ye can drink of the Cup He shall pour,
And if never the banner of Truth ye shall lower,
His beloved ye are, and His crown ye shall wear,
In His Throne ye shall sit, and His glory shall share!"

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R5422 : page 86

OUR REASONABLE SERVICE

"I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."--Romans 12:1.

THIS exhortation of St. Paul's is based upon the preceding statements of the eleventh chapter of this same Epistle, as is shown by the connecting word therefore--because of those things recited in that chapter. The eleventh chapter tells of the mercies of God toward both Natural Israel and Spiritual Israel--not so much to the world. But the tenth chapter takes up in elaborate form the mercies of God toward all His creatures. In this Epistle the Apostle is addressing those who had been Gentiles. In view of these mercies of God (His Plan of Salvation and the call of some of the Gentiles to take the places in the Body of Christ, lost by Natural Israel) St. Paul exhorts his hearers to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable.

The question naturally arises, Whom did the Apostle address? He evidently is using these words as an exhortation, not to the world, but to believers. The introduction to the Epistle indicates that it was written to those already consecrated. But evidently some connected with the Church at Rome had not yet made a consecration. Some who were believers, who had come to a knowledge of the Lord and had counted the cost of self-sacrifice, but who had not given themselves fully to the Lord, might yet become brethren in the Truth in the full sense. The Apostle's words would apply equally to both classes--those who had presented their bodies living sacrifices, and those contemplating doing so. It would have been fully as proper to say, Brethren, you who have already given yourselves to the Lord, I beseech you that you fulfil your Vow of Consecration; for your bodies are holy and acceptable to God.

The Heavenly Father never forces anybody; but He tells them that He is willing to accept sacrifices, and that now is the acceptable time to present them. He sets forth the fact that self-denial and sacrifice are the only terms upon which one can come into fellowship with Him. But nowhere does He urge or command any one

to make a consecration. To do so would be to change the matter from sacrifice to obligation; and the very thought of sacrifice is in opposition to requirement.

THE TERMS OF DISCIPLESHIP

Our best example of what we should do is shown by our Lord and the Apostles, the chief members of God's royal family. Our Lord did not seek to entrap any into His service--as we see done today. On the contrary, He proceeded along high and noble lines. He said, "Come unto Me, all ye that are oppressed and heavy-laden." This is an appeal to reason. If you have found that you are sin-sick, come unto Me--I have the will and the way to help you to come to the Father.

When talking to the young ruler of the synagogue, our Lord set forth the terms of discipleship. He did not say, Never mind; do not make it too serious a matter. On the contrary, He stated just what are the terms of consecration. No man could be His disciple unless he would surrender all. To this rich young man our Lord showed that with all his morality there was inconsistency. He possessed wealth, and should use that wealth to the glory of the Lord. He must not be selfish, or he could not be Christ's disciple.

The young man might have said, I have some children for whom I must make provision. But the Lord said, Give all that you have to God. A parent can consecrate his children, so far as he is concerned. The Lord would not ask any one to do that which he was unable to do. But he said, "Take up your cross and follow Me," if you would be My disciple.--Mark 10:21.

Again our Lord said, "He that putteth his hand to the plow, and looketh back, is not fit for the Kingdom." (Luke 9:62.) We should make up our mind to use all of our powers, or else stand aside. The Lord's method should be our guide. We should not try to entrap any one or resort to hocus-pocus to convince any one. We should not plead what there is to be gained in a material way by becoming a Christian. We should tell people that there is no other way to come into Christ but by the way of the cross. We cannot reach Him in any other way. It is the Lord's way or no way. We must

R5422 : page 87

bear the cross, as He bore it. We believe that we do the people more good by setting forth the Message with no uncertain sound than trying to entrap them. Nevertheless, in putting before them the trials and cross, we should also put before them the glory to follow.

TEXT APPLIED TO THE CONSECRATED

To those who have already made a consecration the thought would be, You have entered into a Covenant with

God to follow Jesus. You have given up your own human will. Remember that this includes your mortal body. Continue the work of presenting your body--of dying daily. Keep before your mind this Covenant of Sacrifice; for it is not yet fulfilled. The mere promise to fulfil a covenant is not fulfilling it.

The Father begets us of the Holy Spirit, and gives us the great privileges that belong to those who have become New Creatures in Christ. Then it is for us to go forward, and day by day lay down our lives in His service. It would be appropriate, therefore, for the Apostle to say to such, Lay down your lives daily. Remember that it is your mortal bodies which you are to sacrifice in the Lord's service. It is yourselves as old creatures, human beings, and not as New Creatures, that are being sacrificed. Yours is a living sacrifice in the sense that this body, reckonedly passed out of sin, is being continually sacrificed. It is not given to preserve, or to be your everlasting possession; but it is your covenant and privilege to accomplish the sacrifice of your flesh. Therefore I beseech you to do this.

TEXT APPLIED TO THE TENTATIVELY JUSTIFIED

To those whose justification has not been vitalized, the text might mean, You are desirous of serving God. This is indicated in your attending the meetings of the Church. The fact that you assemble with the saints of this congregation signifies that you love holy things--that you desire to know the will of God. Now then,

R5423 : page 87

brethren, I beseech you to make a full consecration of yourselves to God. Consider your body as a living sacrifice --not that you are to commit suicide and destroy your body, but that you are to esteem your body a living sacrifice, day by day using your strength and your life in the Lord's service.

The exhortation, "Present your bodies," then, would seem to be applicable both to the consecrated and to those who are following on to know the Lord. The next statement should be understood to be in harmony--"holy and acceptable to God." If this statement be taken in relation to those who are already consecrated, then the Apostle is saying, This vitalization of your justification which the Lord has granted you has constituted you holy. And because the Lord counts you holy, and yourselves wholly acceptable to Him, you should continue to do good works --complete the good work which you have begun. The sacrifice being esteemed of God holy and acceptable, the results will be grand and glorious.

This exhortation, viewed from the standpoint of one who has not completed his consecration, might be understood to mean, if you take this step of consecration, remember that then the merit of Christ will be imputed to

you, and that through the arrangement which He has made in Christ God is willing to accept you.

CONSECRATION TO DEATH MOST REASONABLE

Every one who recognizes God's mercies and blessings finds it a "reasonable service" to sacrifice the earthly things for the precious privilege of serving Him. If it was a reasonable service for Jesus to leave the Heavenly glory, to become a man, and to sacrifice Himself unto death, then surely ours is most reasonable. We, being imperfect, have very little to give; and when there is an opportunity for showing our appreciation of the Heavenly Father, then we should make haste to use it.

The Father made a proposition to the Lord Jesus, and it is not to be supposed that He would suggest anything but a reasonable service. To have asked Jesus to sacrifice His life for humanity without any reward of a future life would have been a most unreasonable thing. The Father set before the Redeemer a great joy, to be the recompense of His obedience. And so with us. The Lord does not invite us to sacrifice ourselves at the present time without any reward from Him. He tells us that if we do this He will make us joint-heirs with His Son, participators with Him in all the joys of the Kingdom.

CONSECRATION NOT THE END OF OUR WORK

The term Brethren may be viewed from two different standpoints. On the one hand, we may apply it to those who are in the state of prospective justification, in a justified attitude of mind, and whose justification is growing by every step they take toward God. On the other hand, it would refer to those who have become brethren in the fullest sense--who have taken the step of consecration, and whose consecration has been accepted by the Father through the Lord Jesus. With these there is a continual, a daily presentation. This morning we presented ourselves before the Lord and asked His blessing on the day. It is a presentation day by day and hour by hour. It is a constant surrender of self-will, in this way and in that way--a daily waving of our offering before the Lord. So it was with our Lord Jesus. He not only made the full consecration at the beginning, but day by day He laid down His life, until the sacrifice was completed on Calvary.

For one to make a consecration of his time and his talents, and then to withhold his offering, would insure his not gaining the great prize for which the Father invited him to run. The Great Company will be made up of those who have presented their bodies, but who neglected their opportunities for laying down their lives--their time, influence, money, all--in the Lord's service. This neglect will lose them their place in the Throne, their privilege of being a part of the Bride class. The Bride will be made up of those who not only have presented

their bodies in the beginning, but have faithfully continued that presentation unto death.

CONSTRAINED BY GOD'S MERCIES

The Apostle states the reason why we should make this presentation of ourselves as being the "mercies of God"--"I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies." God's mercies are to a certain extent over all. He sends His sunshine and His rain upon the evil as well as upon the good. For many centuries God's special mercies were granted only to the Jews. But the arrangement of God's Plan is such that Gentiles, as well as Jews, may now come into God's favor. God broke down the middle wall of partition through Christ, and thus gave all people an opportunity to come back into harmony with Him and to have Him as their Father, their Life-Giver, and through Christ to share His blessings.

As many as see and hear and have the eyes of their understanding opened, should consider this a reason for a full consecration, a full surrender, to the Lord. It is truly a most reasonable service, as the Apostle points out; and the prize which He attaches to the matter makes it unspeakably desirable and precious. It would be very unreasonable to accept God's marvelous favors and then neglect to live up to the conditions attached to them. If

R5423 : page 88

we really believe God, if we have a proper faith in His exceeding great and precious promises, we will joyfully and faithfully meet the requirements.

A lady said to us recently: You put more stress on godly living than we in our Church have done. You say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." You put a special stress on believing. Yes, we replied, this word believe has a most important bearing on the entire matter. If we should say to you that if on your way home today you would stop at a certain house, of a certain number, you would find, in a particular corner under the steps, a little bag, and that it contained valuable treasure which should be yours--if you believed our words you would go and get that bag. If you said that you believed us, and then went another way altogether, we would be sure that you had not believed us. Your course would prove it.

Now the Lord has offered us the opportunity of being joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord in "an inheritance incorruptible and individual and that fadeth not away." If we believe this fact, we will seek to know just what the conditions are. Whoever really believes will find that the conditions are very easy in comparison with the great reward. But if he fails to put forth his greatest effort to win this great prize, he will show that he has not believed the Message; for if he recognizes the offer and

believes it, he will surely be eager to lay aside every weight and encumbrance and run patiently to the end to obtain the crown.--Hebrews 12:1,2.

THE COMPLETENESS OF OUR OFFERING

It is, therefore, a reasonable service. The Apostle tells us the conditions. All who would have this great blessing must offer themselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God. It is ours to present our bodies. It is not the New Creature who does the presenting; there is no New Creature at the time the body is presented. Our natural mind discerned from the Message of the Lord that there is a more excellent way--of harmony with the Lord--and we desired to come thus into harmony with Him. And that new, or changed, will presents our earthly interests and all that we have in sacrifice. We are altogether human when we offer ourselves to the Lord. We are then begotten to a new mind, a new hope, and thus are New Creatures.

While we present ourselves to God, we do not come to Him directly with our presentation. We come through the great High Priest--as in the type, the offering of the Lord's goat was presented by the high priest. We come to the Father through the Redeemer. We do not offer a justified sacrifice, but come with all our sins, for cleansing in that fountain opened for us. The sentiment of our hearts is:

"Just as I am without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee--
O Lamb of God, I come!"

But God could not accept a sacrifice in that imperfect condition; it is only as we come through the Priest that He recognizes us. If we were perfect, we might come in our own name; but we are not perfect, and so we come only through this High Priest, Jesus. The great High Priest then imputes His merit, and includes our sacrifice as a part of His own. The Divine blessing then comes upon us--we are begotten of the Holy Spirit. Thenceforth we are New Creatures in Christ. We have been presented in God's way and have been accepted.

REFUSAL TO ACCEPT SHOWS LACK OF APPRECIATION

Now we are dead; and our life is hid with Christ in God. We presented our bodies, and they were made living sacrifices: they were then received by God and were slain with Christ and we arose to walk in newness of life. By the body is meant also all the earthly interests, both present, past and future--every interest that we ever had or might ever have. Such a one gives up all the hope or right he might otherwise have had in a future Restitution. The covenant is a complete one. The sacrifice of such became holy and acceptable to God as soon as the merit of Jesus was imputed; and our offering continues

to be acceptable to the end. And as day by day we lay down our lives in the Lord's service, it brings us more and more of the Lord's blessings, and we are more and more filled with His Spirit.

R5424 : page 88

To render all that we have in the service of the Lord is not only a most reasonable thing, but an offering far too small. It is far less than we would gladly render to Him who has manifested toward us such wondrous compassion and grace. When God has offered us so great a reward and blessing in return for our poor lives, we should feel that a refusal to accept this offer would be an indication not only of a pitiful lack of appreciation of Infinite Goodness, but also a weakness of mind. It would show a puerility of judgment which is unable to weigh and compare the trifling and transitory pleasures of self-will for this brief life with an eternity of joy and blessing and glory on the Divine plane, far above angels and principalities and powers and every name that is named, next to our glorious Lord and Head--a station so glorious, so exalted, that no human mind can grasp its infinitude. Let us be faithful--even unto death!

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R5424 : page 88

LET US GO ON "IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH"!

"Having an High Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."--Hebrews 10:21,22.

THE Apostle Paul is here drawing to the attention of the Church, and especially to those familiar with the Jewish arrangements of that day, the fact that the Aaronic priesthood was only a typical one, designed for a time to illustrate greater things; that God's real Plan was not to be carried out by the Aaronic priesthood from the House of Levi, and that their sacrifices of bulls and goats could not take away sins; but that from year to year this arrangement merely shielded God's typical people--typically covered them--through their Covenant. The Apostle points out that there is to be a greater Priesthood, after the Order of Melchizedek; that our Lord is the Head of this Priesthood, and that the Gospel Church are His members, the under-priesthood. He then asks, why should a better priesthood be needed than the one that God provided in Aaron and his sons? The answer is that they were sinners, and could never really cancel sin; and the blood of those animals possessed no real merit. Those priests themselves never

really got back into favor with God. They merely had access into a typical Holy and Most Holy.

But now we have Christ as the Head of this new Order of Priesthood; let us realize our position as under-priests of this order. Our High Priest has entered into the true Most Holy. The evidence of this came in the Pentecostal blessing showing that the Father was well pleased with the sacrifice made by our Lord, and that all things were then ready to permit us also to come near to

R5424 : page 89

God, sharing our Redeemer's experiences, that we might later go to Him beyond the veil and share His glory. Seeing that God has thus made all these gracious provisions, and has accepted us as the House of God to take the place of the House of Aaron--and so much greater than his House--let us enter into the real Holy and Most Holy, "with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."

The under-priests were permitted to enter into the Holy, and after the Day of Atonement into the Most Holy. All, in this Gospel Age, who have made consecration to God, and have been begotten of the Spirit, are in the first Holy. Aaron and his sons were a type of the true Priesthood; but we are not of the order of Aaron; we are not members of the Aaronic priesthood, but of the Melchizedek Priesthood, under its great High Priest. "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."--1 Peter 2:9.

LET US COME WITH TRUE HEARTS

Seeing, then, that we have confidence that God has made this arrangement, confidence to take the proper steps, and have presented our bodies living sacrifices, have gone through the antitypical consecration, and received the begetting of the Holy Spirit, let us begin at once the work of the new Order of Priesthood. There are great things to be accomplished: let us fully enter in with Him--let us become full participators in this work--in everything that God has for us to do. Let us come with true hearts, however, realizing how wonderful are our blessings, how precious is the provision of the covering of our Savior's merit. Let us be true and loyal to this Covenant into which we have entered with God.

The Lord's call under this Covenant is, "Gather My saints together unto Me, those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5.) This call, or invitation, has been going forth during the entire Gospel Age. And all the holy ones, all who have entered into this Covenant, are privileged to have a share in the sacrifice of Christ and to co-labor with Him.

Let us come with full assurance of faith in the sense that we shall have no doubt whatever that God's promises

are true and for us. The world sees no cause for sacrificing in the present life, and they count us fools all the day long, as the Apostle says. But nevertheless in full assurance of faith, let us go on! Let us loyally press forward unto the end of the way, until we shall be joined to our great High Priest, and enter into His rest!

ANOINTED IN HIM

The anointing of the high priest in the type represented the Divine appointment to office. Aaron was thus anointed of God. The Apostle Paul says that "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron." Even Christ took not this honor upon Himself. God appointed Him, saying, "Thou art a Priest forever, after the Order of Melchizedek." (Hebrews 5:4-6.) God's direct dealings were with the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the One acceptable to the Father. God gave His Holy Spirit to our Lord in fullest degree. Jesus Himself tells us that God gave not His Spirit by measure unto Him, because He was able to receive the Holy Spirit in full measure. Those who are counted as His members are not able to receive the Spirit in full measure, because of their imperfection. The less fallen man can receive more of the Spirit, and the more fallen man can receive less.

When Christ appeared in the presence of God for us, and applied His merit for those who would offer themselves to become members of His Body, to be associated with Him in the glorious Kingdom work, He received Divine approval and sanction, which was manifested by the begetting by the Holy Spirit of those who had presented themselves in consecration, the Holy Spirit being first given at Pentecost. The Apostle Peter says that God fulfilled His promise to Jesus by granting Him the Holy Spirit to shed forth upon His disciples. (Acts 2:33.) It is of the Father, and by the Son.

It was not necessary that the Heavenly Father should pour out His Holy Spirit upon each individual member of the body. We understand that the picture given in the type is quite complete. The Holy Spirit being poured out upon the Head of the great High Priest, and flowing down over the skirts of His garments, all His Body is thus anointed. We each receive our share of the anointing when we come into the Body, and under the Robe.

FULL ASSURANCE BASED ON KNOWLEDGE

Speaking to those who are privileged to come to God in prayer, the Apostle says, "Let us draw near in full assurance of faith." He is speaking to the House of God class. Natural Israel were of the House of God, too, but they were servants. The servants belong to the House, of course, but not in the very special sense, as do the children. We have the suggestion given us that Moses was faithful as a servant over his House, but that the

Church of Christ are a House of Sons, and that Christ is Head over this House. It is this House of Sons that may draw near to God. The assurance with which these may rightly approach is dependent upon certain conditions here indicated. They must have a true heart, and are not to be double-minded. Entire heart loyalty must be theirs; they must fully demonstrate that they meant what they said when they gave their lives to God. Then they may come to the Lord with holy boldness, in full assurance of faith. All the steps of God's true people are steps of faith, of realization of His care. But there is a full assurance of faith in contrast with a lesser faith. A faith that is only partial will bring us somewhat near to God. A faith that is strong will bring us nearer. But a full assurance of faith is that faith which, if retained, will bring us off "more than conquerors," and make us at last members in full of the Royal Priesthood--in glory.

This full assurance of faith cannot be attained in a day. It requires quite a degree of information. And God has provided this information by instructing us in His Word as to what Christ did for us, and what He is willing to do; why He died for us, etc. All this is furnished us as a basis for faith. Then to further strengthen our faith, we have all the exceeding great and precious promises, and His daily providences over us. Therefore this fully consecrated class may draw near, and have the full assurance that they may attain all the glorious things to which God has invited them--to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

FULL ASSURANCE NECESSARY TO GOD'S APPROVAL

The Apostle intimates that without this full assurance of faith the child of God cannot come close to Him. Only those who trust the Father as a little child would trust its earthly parent, can expect to make good progress in the narrow way and have the courage and confidence which it is the privilege of all who are His to have, and without which we cannot have the perfect peace and rest of heart promised. "According to your faith be it unto you," is the promise. The desire to draw nearer and nearer to God must be in our heart; else we shall fail to go on and

R5425 : page 90

attain our privilege in Christ. Such a desire is a manifestation of our hunger and thirst after righteousness, which the Lord expects to see before He makes good to such His engagement that they shall be filled.

There are definite conditions specified in the Word as necessary to continued progress along this line. As we cannot draw close to the Lord except through this full assurance, neither can we have the assurance unless our hearts are kept "sprinkled from an evil conscience," or a consciousness of evil; for, as the Apostle also declares, "If

our own heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." (1 John 3:20.) We may be sure that if our course as New Creatures in Christ is condemned by our own conscience it would also be condemned by God.

Therefore, if the child of God would draw very near, and would have the blessed realization of the Father's smile of approval continually, he must seek to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men--a conscience which can truthfully say, I am striving to do that which would be pleasing to the Lord, that which is in full harmony with my Covenant of Sacrifice; and I am striving also to do that which would justly have the approval of righteous men. Nothing short of this is at all permissible in those who have consecrated themselves to be members of the Royal Priesthood, to sacrifice their lives in the Lord's service that they may reign with Him.

CAUSE AND REMEDY FOR LACK OF FAITH

He who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. (Philippians 1:6.) But how few children of God, comparatively, have this "full assurance of faith" which is our glorious privilege! How few can say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever!" Surely, by God's grace I shall ultimately gain the Heavenly Kingdom and the glorious things which He has promised to those who love Him. The few who can thus enter fully into sympathy with the Apostle Paul and the Prophet David in their expressions of confidence have therein a great joy, a great blessing, a great rest of heart which none others possess.

Let us therefore inquire why it is that the number who thus enter into the rest of faith is so small. What are the hindrances to others, and how can these hindrances be removed? How can each one of the children of God enjoy fully this, his blessed patrimony? Many say, or think if they do not say, Oh, that I could feel sure that God's goodness and mercy would continue with me to the end! Oh, that I could remove my doubts of gaining the Kingdom, of being ultimately "more than conqueror"!

What is the difficulty with these? Why do they not have the "full assurance of faith" of their acceptance? We answer that their difficulty is a lack of trust in God; and such a lack is not pleasing to Him, for "without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6.) Moreover, this lack of faith is a constant hindrance to their overcoming; as it is written: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our FAITH." (1 John 5:4.) The Christian who has not the shield of faith, and a large one, is continually at a disadvantage before the Adversary, and all the hosts of evil.

Then let each one who realizes a lack in this direction

pray earnestly, as the Apostles of old, "Lord, increase our faith!" And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, let such a one cultivate such faith in his or her own heart. (1) Let him refresh his memory continually with the precious promises of the Word, becoming very familiar with these. (2) Let him seek more and more to remember that, having made a covenant with the Lord, these promises are his; and in his heart and with his lips let him claim them as his before the Throne of Grace, with thanksgiving. Let him claim them in his thoughts, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

When trials or difficulties arise, he should call to mind these precious promises, remembering that they belong to him, because God has given these promises to such as love Him and have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5; Malachi 3:17.) He should resolve that henceforth he will trust the Word of his Heavenly Father implicitly. If some seeming accident befall him, let him call to mind the promise, "All things work together for good to them that love God, who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28.) Let him thus assure himself that the seeming accident could not have occurred had God not seen a way to make it the channel of a needed lesson or blessing to him.

Let us never forget that He who has begun this good work in us changes never, and that if we keep our hearts in harmony with Him, if our faith is still firm and clear in the great Atonement made for our sins, and we continually renew our consecration to Him, keeping our all on the altar of sacrifice, letting the Lord consume it in His own way, seeking not our own will, our own way, but His will alone, we have every reason to have full confidence that this good work in us will be finished, that we shall enter with joy into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord, and shall hear His blessed words of approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

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R5425 : page 90

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

--APRIL 19.--LUKE 14:25-35.--

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it."--Matthew 16:25.

IT WAS at the close of the Great Teacher's ministry. Vast multitudes were following Him, all, according to the requirements of the Law, going up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of the Passover, at which Jesus foreknew, that He would die as the antitypical Passover Lamb. Occasionally in the journey He would turn and address some of the

multitude. Today's lesson gives us some of His teachings. It was the custom of teachers in those days to accept disciples, or pupils--those who considered them great teachers and desired to learn of them and profit by their instruction. To this day Christians claim to be the disciples, or followers, of Jesus, claim to be giving heed to His word and seeking the blessing which He promised to His faithful followers.

The terms of discipleship which Jesus set forth, it will be noted, are very different from those proclaimed by some who profess to be His mouthpieces, His ministers. They sometimes proclaim that it is a sufficient sign of discipleship for persons to arise in a congregation and declare that they desire the prayers of God's people. Such are counted converts. To get them to take even this step requires the holding out of inducements. Sometimes the inducements are of a commercial kind--greater business prosperity to the merchant, greater favor with the employer for the clerk, an entrance into society or a better prospect of political preferment.

If we contrast these methods with the words of Jesus in this lesson, we shall perceive that the vast number of

R5425 : page 91

nominal Christians have been, so to speak, inveigled into professing something that they never intended to profess. Many are entrapped into professing Christianity who never became Christians, according to the Master's conditions of discipleship, and who hearken not to His Word.

"If any man come unto Me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." Surely there is no excuse for us to misunderstand such plain terms and conditions. The Master did not say that only His disciples could ever gain everlasting life. His general teaching was that the whole world is lost, estranged from God and without the right to everlasting life. But He came to die, "the Just for the unjust," that all of the unjust might have the opportunity of returning to Divine favor. He did not say that none but His followers would have such an opportunity of future life. Those who so declare are adding to the Word and helping thus, eventually, to confound themselves.

What Jesus did teach was that He would in due time be "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The world had already existed for 4,000 years before Jesus came, and no one will dispute that those who died previous to His coming had no opportunity of knowing Him and being His disciples. Yet He died to bless them, as well as to bless all who have been born into the world since. This blessing of the world, He declared, is to be accomplished by His Kingdom; and He told them plainly that His Kingdom was not of this

world, age, or epoch, but of a future period. For the time being He was merely inviting disciples, and not attempting to reach the world.

R5426 : page 91

The disciples were invited to become joint-heirs with Jesus in His Kingdom, that they might sit with Him in His Throne and participate with Him in His great work of human uplift--Restitution of all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary. He told them plainly that only through much tribulation would they be able to enter the Kingdom class; that the tribulations would prove their love of righteousness, their loyalty to God; and that God had purposely made the way so narrow that only the few, the very choicest of humanity in God's sight, could find it--a very few walking in that way to its further end of glory, honor and immortality.

With this view clearly before our mind's eye, there is a reasonableness in the hard terms of discipleship. Only those willing to comply with such terms, and thus to demonstrate their love and loyalty to God, could properly be entrusted with the great power, glory and honor which will be granted to the Kingdom class, in association with the Redeemer, as soon as it shall have been completed. Let us examine these words carefully, meanwhile measuring ourselves--not our flesh, but our spirit, our intentions, our desires.

Well did Henry Ward Beecher say respecting this statement made by the Master: "Never was there before, and never has there been since, I apprehend, such a speech made to those that professed to be willing and desirous to follow another." And probably a parallel statement is found in Matthew's Gospel (10:37): "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." The word hate is apparently used in contrast with love. To be a disciple of Christ, then, means that we must love supremely the Lord and the principles for which He stands, so that love for others would comparatively be hatred.

This proposition in its very start signifies a cutting-off --so far as the man is concerned, the will, the purpose --of every other love that would conflict with our love for the Lord and with our obedience to His will. Our earthly loves are to be counted as nothing in comparison. We are to be ready to sacrifice at the Lord's command every earthly hope, aim, object, and to lay down our lives willingly, gladly. Such as manifest a devotion of this kind can be trusted with anything. Of these the Lord speaks, saying prophetically, "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that Day when I (come to) make up My Jewels."--Malachi 3:17.

The fact that Jesus was of this character Himself, and placed the Father's will above all other considerations, is an assurance that all amongst His joint-heirs in the Kingdom will have the same mind, the same spirit. He assures us that the Kingdom will not be a selfish one, but

the very reverse. The kings and princes and judges of that Kingdom will be not only irresistible in power, but incorruptible, unbearably. With them the Divine standard will be first, in the absolute sense.

Such devotion to the Lord as is here described will necessarily at some time or other mean the severing of many earthly ties. It means that the followers of Jesus will be thought a peculiar people; and that many will think their course strange, unnatural, insane. Hence, as St. Paul said, we are counted fools all the day long for Christ's sake--because we preach the Wisdom of God and the Love of God in preference to the wisdom of humanity and the love of humanity. Of such St. John writes, saying, "As He was, so are we in this world"--ostracized, misunderstood; reprov'd, slandered. Only those who can stand such an experience can be winners of the crown to which Jesus referred, saying, To him that overcometh I will give a crown of life, and permit him to sit with Me in My Throne.

Who is sufficient for these things? asks the Apostle. And he furnishes the answer: "Our sufficiency is of God"; and in the promises--"My grace is sufficient for thee; My strength is made perfect in weakness"; and again, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

DEFINITION OF CROSS-BEARING

Adding to the severity of the terms, Jesus declared, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." It is not enough that we should start out with a courageous intention, a bold acknowledgment of Jesus, and a bold profession of discipleship. After we have been faithful in taking our stand on the Lord's side, we must be proven. Not merely those who have a little enthusiasm at the beginning, but those who shall demonstrate their worthiness by their faithfulness will be accounted worthy, and will be finally accepted by the Lord. Cross-bearing must be a daily matter. Our crosses are those oppositions of the world, the flesh and the Devil which conflict with the Divine will as laid down for us in the Lord's Word. The only proper sentiment is that which the Master expresses, saying, "Not My will, but Thine."

As an admonition to all not to undertake discipleship without mature deliberation, our Lord gave a parable of a man who began to build a tower, laying the foundation, but who was not able to complete it, and thus wasted his effort and made himself ridiculous, foolish. Another illustration was that of going to war without adequate preparation--an undertaking which would result disastrously. All the followers of Christ set out to build characters and to "fight a good fight." Whoever enlists under the banner of Jesus takes his stand against Satan and sin, and must expect to have a hard battle, and not to receive the victor's crown, nor to hear the words, "Well

done," except by faithful perseverance in well doing.

What a blessing it would be if all who espouse the cause of Christ would do so with a full, clear understanding of what they are doing and with the fixed determination to go onward in the good way, not even to look back! The cause of Christ would be much further advanced amongst men; and while their number would be much smaller, their influence and power in the world would undoubtedly be much greater.

"SALT IS GOOD, BUT--"

Salt has preservative qualities in connection with whatever it touches. It also serves to bring out the flavor of our food. In olden times it was used as a symbol of faithfulness, loyalty; and it is said that even yet some of the Arabs would be faithful to death to any person in whose home they had eaten salt. To them it seems to mean a pledge of loyalty.

Jesus used salt as a symbol, representing His own loyalty to God and the loyalty which all of His followers must have, and not only so, but which they must maintain. If salt lose its value for seasoning purposes, it is useless for anything else. It will not serve as a fertilizer, for it has an opposite effect. It is absolutely useless except for its intended purpose. So the Christian has a special purpose in the world--to be a preservative power, to have, as it were, antiseptic qualities, and to draw out all the good qualities of those with whom he is connected. This is the mission of the Christian in respect to the world. If he fail in this, he has failed in the purpose for which he was called, and is of no particular value in the Lord's service.

"He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear," said Jesus, in conclusion. All of His followers are to take heed to these words. Whoever neglects them despises the One who gave them, and will surely fail of a blessing that might otherwise have been secured. But as for the world, "ears they have, but they hear not; eyes have they, but they see not." We are not to measure the world by the same standards that we measure ourselves and all who profess to be the followers of Jesus. The world's highest standard is the Golden Rule. The Christian's highest standard is self-sacrifice, doing God's will at any cost.

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R5426 : page 92

HEAVENLY INTEREST IN SINNERS

--APRIL 26.--LUKE 15:1-10.--

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."--Verse 10.

BIBLE STUDENTS should always seek to view the jewels of the Lord's Word in the settings in which they have been placed. To neglect this is to lose a portion of the lesson intended. The Scribes and the Pharisees held themselves aloof from the common people-- the Scribes, because the masses were illiterate; and the Pharisees, under the claim that the people were sinners, cut off from relationship to God, and therefore not proper to be recognized by the holy of humanity, which they claimed to be.

Jesus, however, received the common people, even the publicans, acknowledged sinners. His superior knowledge did not make Him haughty, and His superior righteousness did not make Him proud and unsympathetic. He has set His followers an example that they should walk in His steps. And the more closely they follow Him, the more pleasing will they be to the Father, and the more ready for a share in the Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come."

Our lesson tells us how the Pharisees and the scribes murmured against Jesus, charging against Him as a sin that He received sinners and ate with them. Whatever did not harmonize with their standards they could only contest. Their difficulty in part was that they had too high an opinion of themselves. Their spirit in this matter was an evil one, begotten of the Adversary. Hence Jesus sometimes spoke of them as being children of the Devil, because his works they did, and his spirit they had. But even this does not signify that the Pharisees were

R5427 : page 92

beyond hope of salvation. Did not Jesus address St. Peter on one occasion, saying, "Get thee behind Me, Satan (adversary)"? He was an adversary, had the adverse spirit at the time; but, corrected in harmony with the Lord's spirit, everything was changed.

So it is with us. "His servants ye are to whom ye render service." "By their fruits shall ye know them," said the Master. Applying His words to many who profess to be His disciples, we are bound to suppose that either intentionally or ignorantly they are in opposition to the Master's Spirit and teachings--adversaries of His teachings.

Jesus, knowing the thoughts of the Pharisees, and perhaps noting their gestures and looks or hearing their words, answered them in a parable, saying, "What man of you, having a hundred sheep and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it?" And finding it, he lays it upon his shoulders rejoicing, and tells the fact to his neighbors exultantly. This course of the shepherd, Jesus declared, illustrates the attitude of God

and all the holy angels associated with Him. They have a special feeling of interest in those who have strayed, and especially rejoice in the recovery of such. There is more rejoicing over the repentant sinner than over ninety and nine just persons needing no repentance.

Oh, how encouraging it is to us to know that this is the sentiment of Heaven, and that the fall of man and our imperfections do not stand as a perpetual bar to recognition by the Lord, if we return to Him! He is merciful, and will abundantly pardon, and will remove our sins from us as far as the East is from the West. But this interest is in the repentant one or in the one who has not sinned beyond repentance. Any sheep, having been found by the Shepherd and then preferring the wolfish, would no longer be interesting to the Heavenly ones.

Many apply this parable inconsistently. They seem to think of the whole world of mankind as representing the flock of a hundred sheep, and the one straying as representing the sinners of earth, comparatively few. Surely this cannot be the true interpretation! Rather, as the Prophet has declared, "All we like sheep have gone astray." "There is none righteous, no not one."

Let us rather interpret the parable on a broader scale, in comportment with the facts and the Scriptures. Let us understand the one stray sheep to represent Adam and his family; and the ninety and nine just persons needing no repentance as representing the holy angels. To this view every feature of the parable inclines. The Good Shepherd left the Heavenly flock and came to earth to find, to redeem, to recover, mankind, the lost sheep; and there is more rejoicing in Heaven over human recoveries from sin and alienation from God than over the holy ones themselves, than over each other, who have never been alienated, never needed redemption.

R5427 : page 93

The lesson to the Pharisees is plain. They had a different spirit from that of the holy ones. Theirs was an earthly view, a selfish one, a proud and haughty one, out of accord with the Divine spirit, and not pleasing to God. Jesus would have all of His disciples copy God. "Be ye like unto your Father which is in Heaven." "He is kind to the unthankful." "His mercy endureth forever"--to a full completeness.

His mercy sent His Son, the Under Shepherd, to be our Redeemer, and to help us back into His favor. His mercy will pursue the lost sheep until every member of Adam's race shall have been brought to a knowledge of the Truth and to a full opportunity of returning to the fold of God. To this end the Messianic Kingdom is to be established. To this end also is the present call for the Church, to be a Royal Priesthood, that under the guidance of the great Deliverer, they may be co-laborers with Him in carrying the Message of God's grace to all the members of Adam's family.

Oh, how different this view of our loving Creator from the one which was handed down to us from the Dark Ages! How different from the one which represented the Almighty as angry in a vicious sense!--as having prepared in advance a place for the eternal torture of the human family, except a few who would have the hearing ears and happen to hear the Message in the present life. On the contrary, we find that God's loving provision is only beginning to be manifested, in His favor toward Christ and the Church; and that ultimately the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth, until every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God.

THE LOST COIN

In proportion as we become Godlike we have an interest in sinners--especially in those who through heredity or evil environment are more deeply steeped in sin, ignorance and superstition. Having God's Spirit, we are glad to do anything in our power to reach these sinners. Nevertheless, we are not to be wise above what is written. We are not to expect to find all the sheep. Rather, we are to prepare as many as the Lord our God shall call and draw to be associated with the great Chief Shepherd in the work which He shortly will institute, the work of seeking the lost sheep and finding it and restoring it--all the willing and obedient.

"The Son of Man came to seek and to save (recover) that which was lost." The race was lost, not merely a few, the Church; and their recovery is to include all that was lost. This does not signify universalism, but will be accomplished in bringing every member of Adam's race to a full knowledge of God and to full opportunity of recovery from sin and death.--1 Timothy 2:3,4.

Jesus gave another parable of similar import, to illustrate the same great truth from another angle. It was the custom among Jewish women to wear on the forehead a fringe of coin bangles. These might be of gold or silver, and sometimes represented her dowry. The loss of one of these coins would represent more than its intrinsic value; for its absence marred the beauty of the bangles. The search for the coin would mean that, instead of its being abandoned as not worthy of consideration, it would be hunted for diligently until found. The female neighbors would learn of the loss, and also learn if it were found, and would rejoice with her greatly. This is another illustration of joy in the presence of the angels of God over one repentant sinner.

THE VALUE OF A MAN

Jesus said, "Are ye not of much more value than many sparrows?" And in the present lesson He intimates that a man is of much more value than many coins and of much more value than many sheep. We all agree that

it would be difficult to estimate too highly, too fully, the value of a human life, especially if it were our own life or the life of some one dear to us. But to what extent do we manifest this in our daily lives?

Each should put the question to himself first, before applying it to his neighbors. How do I manifest the spirit of God toward my fellow-men, in placing as the first object of my interest a human life? What am I doing day by day that substantiates my professed interest in humanity in general? How am I showing my interest in my friends, my relatives, my children, my brothers and my sisters?

The manufacturer should take up this subject and ask himself, To what extent am I placing coin as of more value than humanity? To what extent am I allowing the accumulation of coin to interfere with the making and the giving of proper protection to my employees and all for whose welfare I have a care, a responsibility? Their fingers, their eyes, their limbs, their health, their lives, should be precious to every one who has the Spirit of God to the slightest degree.

Each Christian should ask himself, How much of God's Spirit have I? How much of my time am I giving to helping my fellow-men out of their difficulties and trials back to God? How much am I sacrificing of my time and strength in going after the lost sheep? Hearken to the Apostle, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." "He that doeth righteousness is righteous"--and not merely he that professes to be a follower of Jesus.

Nevertheless, we are not to forget that God is the One chiefly interested in this great work, and that He has sent forth His Son for its accomplishment. We are not to forget that not only we have an interest, but that Divine interest and love are greater than ours, and that Divine wisdom is superior; and our course should be to give strict heed to "Him that speaketh from Heaven," to follow His course, His example.

This may mean that we shall to some extent be misunderstood by others. There are many theories for saving the world by social uplift, political uplift, moral uplift, vice-fighting, etc. Undoubtedly, the principle remains always true that there are but two great Captains in the warfare between sin and righteousness; namely, Christ and Satan. It remains true also that whoever is fighting for the One is fighting against the other. It is for us to make sure, first of all, that we are on the Lord's side, on the side of righteousness, truth, purity and goodness. There is still a further step--to make sure that we are fighting as our Captain would wish us to fight; that we are laboring as He would wish us to labor; that we are spending ourselves as He would wish us to be spent.

"This is the will of God (concerning you), even your sanctification." Thus our personal salvation comes first, in God's order. Reconciled to God ourselves and consecrated to His service, we inquire, What is the next step? The answer comes, "Feed My sheep; feed My

lambs." At first we might be disposed to demur, to say, Lord, should we not rather go after the straying, after the lost sheep? The answer is given by the Lord, through the Apostle, that we are to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto the Household of Faith." If, therefore, the Household of Faith demands all of our time when we have the opportunity, we may be doing nothing for the lost sheep, but only helping to perfect those whom the Lord has already found.

R5428 : page 94

The circumstances of the Lord's providence alone can direct our course. When we see His purpose, His object, in this arrangement, all is clear. He is taking out of the world a peculiar people, to be joint-heirs with His Son in the Kingdom; and they all need education along spiritual lines for their own development, and to fit and prepare them to be the Royal Priesthood--to be kings and Priests unto God--who by and by are to judge, to chasten, to uplift, to bless, all the world, in proportion as they shall prove willing and obedient.

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R5428 : page 94

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

FORGIVENESS VS. EXPIATION

QUESTION.--In relation to sins partly wilful, are stripes given for the portion of wilfulness? And when the sin is expiated, is it then canceled?

Answer.--Our Lord died for the sin of Adam--for just the one original sin, and all sins which grew out of that original sin. This sin of Adam affected the body, mind and morals of all the race. Therefore we each have not only our own inherited imperfections to contend with, but also the imperfections of all those around us.

From the time that any one is begotten of the Holy Spirit all things become new. The members of the Little Flock class have no record whatever of condemnation against them; all that condemnation is completely eliminated. The imputation of Christ's merit to their flesh made them perfect in God's sight, and they were brought forth as New Creatures.

These New Creatures have entered into a Covenant with God to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. In the present time, as the Apostle says, we have this treasure of the new nature in an earthen vessel; that is, we have it

under unfavorable conditions. We have also besetments from those around us and from the Adversary to oppose us. All sins, then, that are the result of these adverse conditions, and to which our will does not consent, are coverable by the merit of Christ. If any of these New Creatures unwittingly do that which is contrary to the Divine will, they need not remain in a condemned condition. The Word instructs us that we should go immediately to the Throne of Heavenly Grace and obtain mercy and forgiveness, and help for every time of need.

But suppose that the sin is not merely one of temptation --suppose there is a measure of wilfulness or a measure of slackness, so that the child of God is thus far responsible, what then? We answer that he may still go to the Throne of Heavenly Grace, and the portion of his sin which was unwilling will be covered by the merit of Christ. Whatever portion of the sin is wilful is deserving of punishment, stripes; and these stripes he will surely get. The Father will not allow His children to wander away without help. The stripes complete the expiation of that sin; and it will be canceled from the record. Justice has no longer any charge against him.

But the Scriptures clearly tell us that if any consecrated child of God should sin with full wilfulness there would be no forgiveness whatever for that sin, and it could not be expiated by stripes. The penalty would be death--the Second Death. If he sins with no wilfulness, in full ignorance, entirely without intention, the sin is entirely forgivable, by application for the merit of the precious blood. If he sins with partial ignorance and partial wilfulness, there is a portion that would be forgiven and a portion that must be expiated.

The Apostle Paul declares that if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged of the Lord; but that when we are judged of the Lord we are chastened, that we may not be condemned with the world. (1 Corinthians 11:31,32.) And this chastening that comes upon us is the proper penalty for our degree of wilfulness. The object of the Lord in meting out this chastisement is that we shall learn the needed lesson, and be more watchful.

CHILDREN OF THE FIRST, OR THE SECOND ADAM?

Question.--Whose children will the world be when they awake in the Morning of the New Dispensation--the children of Adam, or the children of Christ, the Second Adam?

Answer.--We understand that they will still be the children of Adam. When we think of our Lord as the Life-giver of the world, we should remember that He is the Life-giver only to those who come unto the Father through Him. When the masses of mankind awaken in the next Age, they will not have undergone any change which would lift them out of Adam and condemnation to

death, into Christ and justification of life.

The New Covenant which God will seal with the precious blood of Christ is to be a Covenant primarily with Israel--to those Jews who are His people, to those who will accept Christ. The faithful Israelites who will accept the Lord and the Covenant relationship through the Mediator which is thus inaugurated for their benefit, will, as soon as they do this, come under the blessings of this Covenant. But mankind in general, who will not yet have come to a position of acceptance of the Mediator, will still be in the same attitude of today--aliens, strangers, foreigners. The work of the Church during that time is described in Revelation 22:17, "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come." But none will begin to live until they partake of the Water of Life.

The world of mankind now go down into death as strangers, aliens from God, and it will be for them after their awakening to avail themselves of the privileges of that time. The Apostle John declares, "He that hath the Son hath life." Those who are awakened will not have this life, not having come into relationship with Christ. His relationship to them during the next Age will evidently be that of a benevolent Ruler, who is willing to enlighten them, to adopt them, if they will, as children, and who is willing to bring them up to the condition where they may have life everlasting. It will take the entire thousand years to fully perfect the race--to bring them up to perfection.

"Tell the whole world these blessed tidings;
Speak of the time of rest that nears;
Tell the oppressed of every nation,
'Jubilee lasts a thousand years!'"

The Lord Jesus will become the Father of all, just as soon as they comply with the required terms. He will give them, first, enlightenment and knowledge. Then if they use this knowledge, light and opportunity, and desire to come into harmony with Him, He will receive them as His children, and grant them the blessings under the New Covenant.

We recall the Scripture which says that the Law shall go forth from Mt. Zion and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. "And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths."

R5428 : page 95

These people represent the world in general outside of those who have accepted the terms of the Covenant. It represents them as learning a lesson and desiring to come into harmony with God. They say one to another, Let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord's House, and let us walk in His paths. Not until they do this will the Mediator recognize them in any sense of the word, nor will they be on probation for everlasting life. As soon as

they are ready to walk in the way of holiness, they will be counted as His children.

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R5428 : page 95

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

FLEETING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

My ever increasing love for the Truths now due, and my growing zeal for the scattering of the same among the masses of people who are beginning to hunger for something more satisfying than brilliant essays and talented choirs, prompts me to mention several opportunities for service which many might use if brought to their attention.

Many Sisters have such splendid chances among their grocers, druggists, and others with whom they deal. The workers in Babylon are always begging these merchants for something for the church-fair, or asking them to buy tickets for the social. It has occurred to me, why not try to sell them the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES? Arrangements could be made to make purchases when no customers are likely to be present, and when the merchants would have spare time. A first volume might be carried, and after making purchases, inquire whether he has ever seen the book. He might be told how it has opened up the Bible to you and then he should be canvassed for a set. If he hesitates about taking a set, sell him a first volume. Say you will want to know how he likes it, as this will make him more likely to read. Try to make some of your purchases thereafter when he is not very busy, that opportunity may be had to water the seed sown.

Brethren employed where there are fellow-workmen have in many cases a grand opportunity to witness to them. These might be canvassed for the STUDIES at the noon hour. Try to eat your luncheon (if you take it with you) near a different man each day, and in the course of conversation tell him about the blessing you have received from these Bible Helps,

R5429 : page 95

and arrange to sell or loan him one of them.

If the Brother has some ability, he might do good by holding little question meetings while eating lunch. The answers should always be brief and to the point. To be helpful, such questions should be on the more simple features of the Plan; deep questions would choke those who are spiritual babes.

For instance, the conversation might be turned to the subject of Hell. The Brother could insist that there is not a single passage in the Bible where the word means a place of endless misery, and the only places seemingly teaching so are very highly figurative passages. Then say, "I have a little book in which every passage in the Bible where the word hell occurs is explained. I will bring it here tomorrow and

read you a couple of wonderful paragraphs in it." This will probably bring them together the next day; and by promising to consider further questions the third day, one might have a regular little lunch-time class. Of course, the majority will tire of it, but a few may stick.

In the larger towns and cities the Truth-hungry might be advertised for. Some city-dailies will allow it among the miscellaneous religious advertisements; but in each case, judgment will have to be exercised as to where it should be placed, and how frequently inserted. The following is suggested as an advertisement:

"Those who want to believe the Bible but have never yet found in it anything as satisfying and reasonable as they would expect God to give, are invited to send their names and addresses to P.O. Box _____. This is no scheme, but simply an effort to bring real religious satisfaction to those who feel their faith is shaking."

Let some able, consecrated Brother call upon those who respond, and either sell or loan them "The Divine Plan of the Ages." He might first tell them of the blessing he is getting from the Word of God now, in contrast to the former conditions. He might call again, from time to time, to see what progress they are making, if the interest warrants. Sisters should call on the ladies who reply.

I find that the Brethren are not sufficiently alert to the opportunities among the foreigners in their town. If there be Greek confectioners in your town, send for a half dozen Greek tracts to give them. The same might apply to Chinese in the laundries, Italians at fruit-stands and in street gangs, etc.

"The Bible Students' Monthly," on "What is Baptism?" is specially good where Brother Russell has been misrepresented very much, because of the article by Prof. Ellis and letter by Rev. T. S. Thompson, endorsing him and his work. The Brethren sometimes forget that they are able to do more than merely circulate yearly Volunteer literature. Often a special tract will fit in very well with local conditions, if circulated at the psychological time.

Every day makes me more desirous for the time when our service will not be limited by the weak, imperfect body in which we now dwell. I am glad that day is so near.

I remain, with Christian love, on Jordan's Banks.

B. H. BARTON.

page 95

GRATEFUL FOR THE LIGHT OF TRUTH

MY DEARLY-LOVED PASTOR:--

It is impossible for me to express in words the gratitude I feel to our Heavenly Father and to you for your faithful ministry. Ever since the light has been brought into my life by STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES I have been desirous of giving you a token of my esteem.

God, in His mercy, has granted me the privilege of enclosing herewith a little gift to you. I realize your time is already very heavily taxed, and so do not wish you to feel it necessary to acknowledge this note. An interest in your prayers, which I know all of God's children have, is all anyone can desire. May God's richest blessings be yours!

Yours in the Master's service, SISTER F.--Mass.

IN REPLY.

DEAR SISTER:--

Yours of the 8th inst. reached me duly, and is much appreciated, not only for the intrinsic value of the gift enclosed, but also for the sentiments expressed--your Christian love. The money, \$100, goes to your credit in the Tract Fund with heartiest appreciation. My personal needs are all supplied from the Tract Fund, as are those of all the Pilgrims.

I am pleased to know that you are enjoying the Truth. I agree with you that it is the most wonderful thing and the greatest blessing that the Heavenly Father could give us in the present life--to know Him and something of His loving kindness, not only for the Church, but also for the world. With Christian love,

Your brother and servant, C. T. RUSSELL.

THINKING TOO MUCH ABOUT SELF

MY DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:--

I am writing to wish you a happy birthday, and a glorious "new birth day" at the day that God may choose; also, to say that the Lord has brought me safely to Trinidad--I believe in answer to prayer before leaving Jamaica. First this, that God would send me where I could best be transformed into Jesus' likeness; and then be a blessing to others, by His grace.

So now I wish to say, I am looking for an answer to the latter prayer, and intend to co-operate in bringing the answer as best I can.

Brother Coward is still away in Demerara; meanwhile I am seeking to assist those already interested. We expect his return soon, and I believe we shall co-operate well together.

Dear Brother, I have just been thinking that possibly an article in THE WATCH TOWER dealing on the subject of too much approbateness--thinking about self and what others think about us, etc.--might help some; that is, it might help them to overcome this tendency. As many of us ought to be approaching manhood in Christ, that very thing may tend to increase this trouble amongst us, especially as some seem inclined to criticize little things a good deal. This difficulty, over-approbateness, seems to be something like a "will-o-the-wisp," very hard to catch hold of and kill.

As ever, your brother in Christ, A. B. BLAKE.

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