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VOLUNTEER EXTENSION WORK

The Volunteers are doing nobly and we have splendid ammunition. No doubt the results will be great. However, we must not hope to know the details until we reach the Kingdom. Meantime it is ours to do faithfully what our hands find to do--what our Lord privileges us to do. We are His ambassadors, His witnesses.

We suggest that Class Extension work find parallel in Volunteer Extension work. After you have served your place of residence, seek the Lord's blessing in an endeavor to extend the distribution of free literature to other towns and cities within a reasonable radius. The Society is pleased to supply the ammunition free of all charges. It merely wishes, with the order, the names of the places to be served and the assurance that the work undertaken will (D.V.) be promptly done--that the literature will not be permitted to lie by unused. Remember that census population includes infants and that a proper estimate of one paper to the family would be one to five of the population. That is to say, a town of 5,000 would require 1,000 copies of the Volunteer matter. In cases where the population is found to be foreign, remember we have free literature in nearly all languages.

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Regular subscribers for THE WATCH TOWER receive a receipt on the wrapper--showing how far their subscription is paid. Thus, if you had been paid up to January, 1913, and sent in a dollar, renewing until January, 1914, we would merely add the figure 4. Such a figure 4, under such circumstances, would stand for the year 1914.

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BETHEL HYMNS FOR AUGUST

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 August follow: (1) 240; (2) 78; (3) 208; (4) 82; (5) 119; (6) 277; (7) 272; (8) 168; (9) 14; (10) 305; (11) 325; (12) 155; (13) 197; (14) Vow; (15) 256; (16) 259; (17) 5; (18) 12; (19) 6; (20) 106; (21) 60; (22) 4; (23) 7; (24) 46; (25) 125; (26) 29; (27) 300; (28) 240; (29) 263; (30) 25; (31) 235.

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NECESSITY OF SELF-CONTROL

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls."--Proverbs 25:28.

IN OLDEN times cities were particularly places of refuge, where the inhabitants of the country congregated for protection. When the earth was less populous and the necessity for government was less appreciated than now, any marauding band was likely to take possession of whatever was open to their attack. So the cities of ancient times had strong walls. This was true, we remember, of Jerusalem and Jericho. It was true of ancient Troy, and also true of cities in Europe. In Vienna, the old wall of the city still stands; and so with other walled cities.

But as improved forms of government were adopted, cities no longer needed protecting walls. The police nowadays constitute a wall of protection. Our text is referring to a wall such as was formerly used, and to a city which had become dilapidated and the wall broken down. King Solomon gives this as a picture of a human being who has no rule over his own spirit. He is unable to protect himself against evil influences from within or without, as a result of having suffered his will to be broken down.

All mankind are born with more or less of determination. Some have this in a very marked degree; others in a lesser degree; no one, we believe, is wholly without this quality of will, purpose. But we find that whether our wills are strong or weak they need direction. Lessons in the directing of our wills come from various quarters; for instance, we have the laws of the city, laws of the state, laws of the country, which direct the individual as to what he may do and may not do--particularly what he may not do. As one looks into the source and history of these laws, he finds that they represent the accumulated will of a long period. Mankind now have very good laws. We have often thought it strange that fallen men have been able to produce such just laws as we find on the statute books today.

But although very good laws may be made, yet people may ignore the law. A jury may set aside all law. A

judge may pervert the law. Thus things that are unlawful may become a practise of an individual or a town or a city. To cultivate in one's self a lawless disposition is to cultivate the spirit of anarchy--a spirit of indifference to the rights and interests of others. There are some who manifest reasonable respect for the laws of man because necessity or public opinion makes it impossible or inadvisable to do otherwise, who may at heart be anarchists as regards the Law of God, the great Law-giver of the Universe.

SAD PERVERSION OF SOUND JUDGMENT

To yield ourselves to passion, to allow it to sweep over us and master us, is disastrous, whether we are weak-minded or strong-minded. The weak-minded have their limitations; the strong-minded have the excess of power, and are more potent for evil. We hear a great many say, when they have lost control of their temper, or have been petulant or morose or ill-natured or discourteous, Well, that's my way; I do not mean any harm. They acknowledge the matter, and seek to justify themselves by saying that it is natural to them. But no human being should live according to what is natural to his or her fallen nature. A being created in the image of God, and still retaining some traces of his original Godlikeness, should live above the plane of the lower animals, which follow merely their natural instincts and passions.

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Some seem to glory in what they are pleased to term their high spirit, which will always stand up for their "rights." They are not so weak and childish as to let anybody run over them! If they do not like what others do or say, they will tell just what they think of the others. They have some force of character! Oh, how the great Adversary and his hosts, together with the perverse fallen nature, can deceive and mislead and blind the judgment that is not guided and instructed by the only true Guide--the Word of God! How they can make that which is noble, and truly strong and Godlike appear weak and puerile--and make that which is weak, base, selfish and animal appear strong and manly!

ALL NEED REGULATION BY SOME STANDARD

All should recognize that the inclinations, the impulses and the preferences of the fallen nature of man are often contrary to that which is right, noble, truly desirable. All should be regulated by some standard, either the civil standard by which the world is governed, or the standard of God. But one might live up to the letter of a law and yet be violating its spirit. The Law of God is the very highest standard of law. And the spirit of God's Law is embodied in the Golden Rule.

This standard the whole world recognizes as right; and surely the Lord's people should measure all their conduct and their words, yea, their very thoughts, by this standard. Thus they will be rulers over their own spirit.

The word spirit in the text under consideration represents

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the mind, the impulses of one's nature. We are to rule our mind, our natural impulses. This means that if a thought present itself to the mind, or if we feel a certain impulse, we should be quick to perceive the nature of the thought or impulse; and if it is not in harmony with the principles of righteousness or with our covenant as children of God, we should at once resist it. If we are unable to do this successfully of ourselves, as is often the case, the heart should be promptly lifted to the Lord for His promised grace to help in time of need. If we feel an impulse toward a certain action or course, we should carefully weigh the matter, and decide as to its righteousness or propriety in the circumstances, looking to our unfailing Source of help for guidance.

The world would say that this is too exacting--that they would have more pleasure in doing their own will. But we know that in doing their own will they frequently get into difficulty. A Christian has covenanted not to follow his own will; he has given up his own will, and has taken the will of God instead. The more advanced the Christian, the more should we expect that he would be able to rule his spirit--"casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought" to the will of God in Christ. And if we rule our mind, our thoughts, we shall rule our tongue. If the thought were not in the mind, the tongue would not utter it.

There is a grave danger of saying things, or of doing things, under a momentary impulse, that our heart, our consecrated judgment, would not approve; hence the necessity of bringing our thoughts and impulses into subjection. We are to consider, What would be the effect of my words or my action upon another? Would it bring harm? Would it be an injury, or cause needless pain, for me to say or do this thing, or would it do good? By thus scrutinizing himself, by thus taking himself in hand, and ruling his spirit, the child of God is showing his earnest desire of heart to be pleasing to the Lord and true to his covenant. And those who learn to rule their own spirit according to the will of the Father are the ones whom He will be pleased to make joint-heirs with His Son in His Kingdom.

HOW TO ATTAIN STRENGTH OF CHARACTER

In what way can a Christian cultivate this control of his own spirit? At first the individual has not the power

to control himself in everything; but as he learns to exercise self-control in the little things, more and more doing what he can in this direction, in thought and word and deed, he will gain in strength of character. We should remember the story of the man who wished to develop his muscles, and who for this reason began to practise each day in lifting a calf. He commenced when the calf was very young, and he lifted it day by day for weeks and months. In due time the calf had become an ox, and he was then able to lift the ox. His daily practise had gradually strengthened his muscles; they increased in strength with the increase in the weight of the animal, until he was strong enough to lift the full-grown ox.

And so with the Christian in his character-development: If we daily practise self-control, we shall gradually attain a strong character along this line, which will be of inestimable advantage to us in our Christian warfare. The cultivation of self-control should properly begin in one before birth, yea, at the time of conception. The mother should practise self-control, that this disposition might be impressed upon the mind of her unborn child, that thus it might enter the world in a much more favorable condition in this direction. And this spirit of self-control will grow in the child after birth, under the proper training of the parent, so that the child, approaching manhood's estate, will be able to exercise more natural self-control. Such a one, if he become a child of God, will make a very noble Christian indeed; he will be strong in the Lord and be helpful to others. But all have not had this natural advantage, and must battle the more determinedly for this reason.

MORAL STRENGTH MORE DESIRABLE THAN PHYSICAL

There is no place where the proof of our ability to rule our spirit is better shown than in our own home. With husband and wife, with parent and child, with brother and sister, this is an important matter. The battle with self is the greatest battle we have to fight; and the Word of God declares that "he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." He is greater because he has learned to exercise the will, the determination, of a true character in the right direction, in the direction of control of self.

Moral strength is infinitely nobler and more to be desired than the greatest degree of physical strength or the keenest strategy. And it is only after we have conquered ourselves, only after we have become master of our own flesh, only after we have cast out the beam from our own eyes, have subdued anger, malice, hatred and strife in our own hearts, that we are able, by means of these severe battles with our own weaknesses, to assist the brethren, to assist our neighbors, to aid them--by our example--in overcoming their besetments and infirmities.

WE MUST FIGHT TO THE END

To rule one's own spirit, mind, disposition, implies a conflict similar in some respects to that of taking a city; for no matter where we begin, we find entrenched within us many armed and opposing powers. They have possession by heredity--they are there as the result of the fall. And if we have passed the days of youth they are the more strongly entrenched, and it requires the greater skill and generalship to rout them. But whether one has begun early or late, he that would succeed in ruling his own spirit must "war a good warfare." He must "fight the good fight of faith," down to the very end of the present existence.

If the child of God would be the victor in this fight, he must not only storm all the fortresses of inherited evils, which seem to be a part of his very nature, but having gained possession and taken his seat upon the throne of this symbolic city (his will), he must thereafter be continually on the defensive; for the old enemies are constantly on the alert, and ever and anon seek to regain possession, so that he who continues to rule his own spirit is one who has not only routed the enemy, Sin, from the throne of his being, but is continuing to keep him at bay.

This ruling of one's spirit is by no means an easy task; and, as in the illustration, it cannot be done single-handed and alone. Consequently, the wise "general" will invoke all the assistance at His command, remembering the words of the Apostle--"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places." (Ephesians 6:12.) These powers of the world, the flesh and the Devil are closely allied, and therefore he who plans for conquest and an established reign thereafter, must seek alliance with another and a stronger Power. This Power is tendered to all who earnestly undertake this great work. It is none other than the Almighty Arm of our God, who says to those

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who accept His strength, greater is He that is with you--that is for you--than all they that be against you; gird yourselves like men, be strong, fear not.--See 1 John 4:4; Isaiah 35:4.

The ruling of this symbolic city--one's own spirit--will never be accomplished until first the "commanding general," the Will, has positively decided to change his allegiance from Sin to God, and to rout the rebels who resist the change. But, in the words of a trite saying, "Where there's a will, there's a way"--for good or for evil. God will assist, through various agencies, toward good; Satan, through various agencies, toward evil. If the Will says, "It must be done," it calls in the needed, available help; and forthwith it sets all the other faculties of the mind at work, first to subjugate, and then to rule

and regulate the entire being. Conscience is commanded to keep a vigilant watch over all the mental operations. Judgment, under the influence of Conscience, must decide as to the righteousness or the unrighteousness of any matter, and report to the Will, which is under the same moral influence.

THREE DEPARTMENTS OF MENTAL GOVERNMENT

Thus we have three departments of government established --the legislative, which should always be the Conscience; the judicial, the Judgment; and the executive, the Will. In every well-regulated and righteously-ruled mind, all the other faculties must make their appeal to

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this Congress and, as the Will insists, in due and proper order. Their appeal to the Will to execute their desires before submitting them first to Conscience, and then to Judgment, should never be tolerated; but when approved there, they may freely urge their claims upon the executive power, the Will. The Will governs; and if the Will be weak, the government is slack, and the appetites, passions and unholy ambitions take advantage of the situation. They seek to overbalance Judgment and to silence Conscience, and loudly clamor to the Will to have their own wild way.

If the Will be weak, but strive to keep itself under the influence of Conscience and sound Judgment, it will be fitful and irregular in its rulings; and the government will be unstable and ultimately wholly at the mercy of the fallen appetites, passions and ambitions. The condition of such a soul is one of anarchy which, unless its wild course be speedily arrested, will hurriedly sweep the whole being toward destruction. It is all-important, therefore, that the Will be entirely consecrated to God and righteousness; and that it strengthen itself in the Lord, and in His name and strength rule with a firm hand, cultivating as its assistants Conscience and Judgment, in determining the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, as expressed in His Word.--Romans 12:2.

The Will has the most difficult office to fill; and the Lord's commendation will be to the man of resolute Will, instructed by an enlightened Conscience and Judgment. Blessed is the Christian who sets his house in order, and who maintains that order to the end of his days. The thorns and thistles of his old nature have been exterminated; the beautiful flowers of peace, righteousness and love have been cultivated; and now they flourish and adorn his character. The warring elements of his old nature have been brought into subjection to his New Will. As the poet Whittier has beautifully expressed it:

"All the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm;

And all the angles of the strife
Now rounding into calm."

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OUR RESPONSIBILITY CONCERNING PRESENT TRUTH

"His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing; and I could not stay."--Jeremiah 20:9.

THE Prophet Jeremiah is here using a very forceful comparison. He had a burning zeal in his heart, a consuming sense of the importance of the message given him to deliver. His previous declaration of the Word of God concerning Israel had been so despised and rejected that he had become disheartened. He himself declared, "The Word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said: I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name. But His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary of forbearing, and I could not stay!" His message had to be spoken. The Lord had instructed him to tell Israel that they were about to be given over into the hands of their enemies.

This Word of the Lord to the Prophet Jeremiah was given prior to the seventy years' captivity of the Jews. There were false prophets among them who declared that the King of Judah was to gain a victory over their enemies. The people were glad to hear this assurance; and they despised the true Prophet of the Lord, who gave them the real Message from God. Jeremiah told them that they had failed to keep their Covenant with the Lord; that they had failed in their responsibilities to Jehovah, whose people they professed to be, and whom they had promised to serve faithfully; that it was not too late even then for any to be delivered, who would repent; but that the nation was surely to be delivered to their enemies and carried away into captivity.

JEREMIAH'S CRUCIAL TEST

Jeremiah knew that the false prophets would encourage the king, and that he himself would bring the king's wrath upon his own head by reiterating the message which Jehovah had commissioned him to deliver. He shrank from the infamy, the reproach and the persecution which by experience he knew would result from loyalty to the Lord. But he overcame the temptation to hold his peace. He would speak as God commanded him, let the cost be what it would. He would tell Israel again the words which had been given him. He would give

them a further warning.

If Jeremiah had allowed his fears to overwhelm him, and had withheld the message, undoubtedly he would have been set aside as the mouthpiece of God, and another would have been commissioned to deliver the message. The burning within the heart of the Prophet would have grown feebler and would ultimately have died out. When a fire is kept shut off from a draft for some length of time, it will become extinguished. This is as true in the realm of moral and spiritual forces as in that of physical nature. This is why the Apostle Paul urged: "Quench not the Spirit." We might let the Holy Spirit of God die out in our hearts by a failure to do our duty, a failure to keep our covenant faithfully. The light within us, the holy fire, would smolder for a time, and finally become extinct. The Prophet Jeremiah could not withhold that which God had commanded him to speak; he could not quench the fire within his soul without losing his relationship with Jehovah.

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GOD'S MESSAGE GIVEN US TODAY

Thus it is with us today. God has let us into the secret of His counsels. He has granted us a wonderful spiritual illumination. He has given us a Message of the utmost importance to deliver to His professed people. We have been informed by the Lord that a great change is impending--that the lease of power to the Gentile nations is about to expire. We are instructed that the present religious systems of Christendom are to go down, that the rule of the present order is about to end, and that the dominion is about to be given "to Him whose right it is" to reign. The kingdoms of this world are about to "become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever."

This Message is not to be stated in a rude manner. But it is to be stated, nevertheless. The great King whom God hath appointed is about to come in. In Jeremiah's time, the message was that the Kingdom of God, His typical kingdom, was about to be overthrown. The lease of power to the Gentiles, under the domination of the Prince of this world, was about to be inaugurated. This order of things was to be permitted to run for an appointed time. That time is now about to run out. The King's Son is soon to receive His long-promised inheritance. (Psalm 2:7-9.) We are glad that our Message is not now the overthrow of God's Kingdom, but the very opposite of this--the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

So we are to tell forth this glorious Message. We are to tell it in our actions, in our words, by the printed page, by pictorial presentations to the eye, and in every way that the Lord shall give us the opportunity. If through fear of persecution, of losing prestige in the eyes

of men, for love of ease, or for any reason whatever, we should fail to give forth the Message of God, it will be taken from us and given to one who is worthy. The Lord is seeking those who are valiant for Him, for righteousness, for truth. If we prove ourselves weak, we are not fit for the Kingdom.

ARE WE FULFILLING OUR COMMISSION?

Is this wonderful Message, this Message the like of which was never before granted to men or angels to tell, burning within us? And are we speaking it forth, that its inspiration may cause other hearts to take fire? Can we sing with the poet:

"I love to tell the Story,
It did so much for me!
And that is just the reason
I tell it now to thee"?

If we refrain from telling the Glad Tidings, the result will be that the fire of God's Holy Spirit will become extinguished within us. And if the light that is within us become darkness, how great will be that darkness! The possession of the Truth--God's Message--brings with it great responsibility. Shall we prove faithful to it? Shall we show to our God our deep appreciation of His loving kindness in granting us the knowledge of His wonderful Message of Salvation, His glorious Plan, with its times and seasons?

There is a difference between the operation of the Lord's Spirit in His children now and its operation in the days of the Prophet Jeremiah, and the other holy Prophets. During the Jewish Age the Holy Spirit acted upon the servants and mouthpieces of God in a mechanical manner. Now the people of the Lord have both His Message in His written Word and the begetting of the Spirit, which gives us a spiritual understanding impossible to His people of past Ages. The mysteries of God are now opened up to His faithful children, the watchers; and we are granted a clear understanding of "the deep things of God," some features of which were never revealed until the present time, even to the most faithful of the Lord's saints.--1 Thessalonians 5:1-6.

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"THE DAY IS AT HAND!"

We are also told by the Apostle Paul that the things which were written of the servants of the Lord in past dispensations were written for our admonition and instruction and comfort, "upon whom the ends of the Ages are come." (1 Corinthians 10:11.) Seeing all these things, dearly beloved, "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?" How earnestly, with what painstaking care, should we give heed to the Word spoken unto us! Let us be faithful in

proclaiming the Message of our Lord, now due. Let us tell forth the words which He has put into our mouths, whether others hear or whether they forbear--whether our faithfulness bring us the favor or the disfavor of the world and of nominal Spiritual Israel. But let us speak His Word in meekness and love, leaving the results with our great Chief Reaper. "The Day is at hand"!

"He cometh to His own--our glorious King!
Can human tongue or pen show forth such glory?
Through earth and sky let our glad praises ring!
O Saints of God, tell forth the wondrous Story!

"He cometh now to reign. What wealth of joy
To all the world! Thy matchless name confessing,
O Son of God, we sound Thy glory forth
O'er land and sea--Thy promised Reign of Blessing!"

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THE GREAT SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP

"The Lord is my Shepherd."--Psalm 23:1

THROUGHOUT the Old Testament the word rendered Lord is in the Hebrew Jehovah, and therefore applies to the Heavenly Father and not to the Heavenly Son. The thought presented in our text--as in other Scriptures--is that the great Over-Shepherd appointed His Son to be the Under-Shepherd of the Sheep, even as the Son has appointed under-shepherds in the Church subject to Him. The work of shepherding is not exercised toward the world. The great Under-Shepherd does not shepherd goats or wolves. The only ones who are shepherded are the sheep; and special care is taken of the Flock of God. The great Over-Shepherd looks out for the interests of His sheep, provides for them, leads them into green pastures, as the Psalmist tells us. He also protects them from wolves and other ravenous beasts.

If we would inquire, Who are these sheep? we find that the Scriptures give us good evidence that originally the Jewish nation constituted this flock, and that King David recognized himself as one of the sheep. Israel was not chosen by the Lord because they were better than the rest of mankind; but God made an exception of that people on account of Father Abraham, for whose sake He became the "Shepherd of Israel." Because of Abraham's great faith in God and his implicit obedience under the most crucial tests, the Lord promised to make of his seed a peculiar people above all the peoples of the earth. He promised to bless them, to assume a particular care over

their affairs, and eventually to use them in blessing all other nations. So God made the Hebrews His chosen people. In proportion as they were obedient to His commands, He blessed them; and whenever they went astray, He chastised them and brought them back again under His care.

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But Abraham was to have another Seed, a spiritual Seed, who were to reign over the natural seed, and to bless all nations and kindreds through the natural seed. The special application of this text, then, we understand to be to Spiritual Israel, just as all the chiefest of God's promises are to Spiritual Israel. Natural Israel were the children of Abraham according to the flesh; but the spiritual children of Abraham are those begotten of the Holy Spirit to a new nature--the spiritual nature. So while the Lord had a care over the affairs of Natural Israel, and still has a care, He has a still more particular care over the affairs of Spiritual Israel.

Hence, we understand that the speaker of this text, viewed from the prophetic standpoint, is primarily the Lord Jesus; and that all His consecrated followers throughout this Gospel Age, all the members of His Body, are also represented in the speaker. All these are likewise privileged to use these words: "Jehovah is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake."

BEWARE OF WOLVES

In this 23d Psalm there is a distinction implied between sheep and wolves. The world likes to be considered strong and well able to defend themselves and their rights. On their escutcheons we never see a sheep portrayed. We see lions; we see the eagle, with its outspread wings and its sharp claws and beak; we see dragons and bears and serpents--everything to indicate ferocity, rapacity, cunning, desire for conquest. The Lord passes by all these strong, fierce nations--the lion, the eagle, the bear, etc., and has called out a new nation, altogether distinct from any of these.

God has chosen for the members of this nation those --few in number--who are sheeplike in disposition and who desire to come into His Fold. For these He has provided a particular way in which to enter this Fold. He does not have bears in His Fold, nor tigers nor wolves nor birds of prey. God does not recognize such; they are not to be fed and cared for as He cares for His sheep. He is the Shepherd only of the sheep.

If, therefore, we would claim the promise of this beautiful Psalm, we must make sure that we are of sheeplike disposition and desirous of being led of the True Shepherd.

We are to be careful to note that there is only one Shepherd who is able to care for our interests and who can be safely entrusted with them. A strange shepherd would lead the sheep astray, would lead them into difficulties, dangers and disaster. For this reason we do not trust everybody who wears the garb of a shepherd. There is but one Shepherd that we can trust.

THE TENDER SHEPHERD'S CARE

The great Over-Shepherd is willing to receive all the straying sheep that long to come back to the Fold. He has appointed as the Under-Shepherd the One who died for us, that He might fully deliver all the sheep from the Evil One--the roaring lion who walketh about seeking whom he may devour. Our gracious Savior left the Courts of Glory and came down to earth, and for thirty-three years He traversed with weary feet this vale of tears. He mingled with the poor and lowly; He wept with the sorrowing and the sinful; He had no place to lay His head. He bore the griefs and sicknesses of those about Him. He suffered and sorrowed; He bore shame and ignominy--and all this even unto death! And why? It was that He might save the "lost sheep." His blessed fellowship with the shining hosts of Heaven was all relinquished during these years of earthly pilgrimage, that the wandering sheep might be found and brought back to the Fold of God.

"There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the Fold;
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off in the dark and cold--
Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

* * *

"But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through,
Ere He found His sheep that was lost.
Out in the desert He heard its cry--
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.

* * *

"Then all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There arose a glad cry to the gates of Heaven,
'Rejoice! I have found My sheep!'
And the angels echoed around the Throne,
'Rejoice, for the Lord brings back His own!'"

* * *

How grateful we should be for such a Shepherd! How can we sufficiently show forth His praise! Truly we can never know this side the veil, "how dark was the night that the Lord passed through," that He might redeem us to God. And from the time we become His sheep He tenderly cares for all our interests, shielding us from every foe and the dangerous pitfalls that lie in our path.

MANKIND THE STRAYING SHEEP

All of the race of Adam are this "lost sheep." Soon the great Heavenly Shepherd will have gathered His sheep of the present Age into the Fold beyond the veil, and then He will have another flock--the world in general. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring," said the Master. Ultimately, all who become godly indeed will be glad to be counted among the Lord's sheep. They will understand God's great Plan for the salvation of men, and will appreciate the marvelous blessing conferred upon the world by the great Over-Shepherd, in sending His Son to die for all mankind, that they through Him might live.

All who will accept the gracious arrangements and obey the rules and regulations of the Lord's Kingdom, doing their best, will be brought into the sheep-fold. In proportion as they are obedient they will be raised out of

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degradation up to perfection. Thus all who become sheep in the next Age will be cared for--nothing shall offend or injure them. The Lord will not permit anything to harm them. They shall feed in green pastures and drink of the pure, refreshing waters of Truth. They shall have a goodly heritage.

But the sheep of the present Age, who are to be exalted, and are to do a shepherding work for these sheep of the incoming Age, are given a distinct and peculiar training, to fit them for their future great work. From the time they are accepted to this higher plane, they are dealt with accordingly. This means that they must have certain trials and afflictions, according to the flesh. And if these sheep recognize that these difficult experiences of the way are necessary, they can well rejoice. If they have full confidence in the Shepherd, they know that He will permit them to have no needless experiences, and none which will be to their injury; but that He will over-rule all their affairs, and will cause all things to work together for their good, because they love Him, because they are the called according to God's Purpose.

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These are the Little Flock, sheep of the highest order. They represent only a small portion of mankind--those who have the special qualities of earnestness, humility

and love of righteousness. Having come into this Fold of God, we have every reason for confidence in the great Shepherd, and should recognize His constant care over us, His supreme interest in our spiritual welfare. Let us be good sheep! Let us not stray from the Fold, to the right hand or to the left, nor be attracted away from the green pastures and pure waters to go browsing on the thistles and poisonous weeds of some by-path, or to drink of the muddy, polluted waters of human speculation and delusive theories of men.

THE SHEEP CHARACTERISTICS

"My sheep hear My Voice and follow Me," said the Master. If we are the Lord's true sheep, we shall know His Voice. We shall not make a mistake. A stranger will we not follow, but will flee from him; for we know not the voice of strangers. (John 10:27,5.) In designating His people "The sheep of My pasture" (Jeremiah 23:1), the Heavenly Father chose a very significant and fitting emblem of the kind of characters He is now seeking. The special characteristics of the sheep are meekness, docility, lack of self-confidence, and obedience to the shepherd in whom they fully trust. The true sheep will listen intently for the faintest sound of the shepherd's voice. It will respond quickly to his call; it will watch for his guidance. Let us manifest all these most desirable traits of character, and ever keep close to our Heavenly Shepherd and Guide, dwelling under His loving care and watchful eye. Those who thus abide in Christ are safe.

"Trusting Him, they cannot stray;
They can never, never lose their way."

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THE IMPORTANCE OF EXAMPLE

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity [love], in spirit, in faith, in purity."--1 Timothy 4:12.

WE REMEMBER that Timothy was an Elder in the Church, though young in years. Therefore, it was appropriate that St. Paul should impress upon his mind that He should be an example of the believers, an example to all the Church; and such instruction is implied in other parts of the Epistle. But note that the Apostle, in our text, does not say: Be thou an example to the believers, but, "Be thou an example of the believers." How different!

Being an example of believers means that one should show forth not only to his fellow-workers in the Gospel, but especially to the world, what believers stand for--what they believe, what they teach, how they live. We should see to it that we are setting such an example in word, as the Apostle enjoins, in the character of our language when declaring the Message of Truth. We are not to be merely smooth-tongued and unctuous; we are not merely to use kind words; but the kindness and interest manifested should be genuine--from the heart. All of the Lord's people are thus to be examples, striving to show forth the praises of our Master.

St. Paul further urges: "Be thou an example in conversation." This word conversation does not refer merely to language, as it is now used: the original meaning of this word is conduct. Our conduct relates to our manner, to the way we walk, to the way we act, to our general deportment, and not to our words alone. We are to be an example in our gentleness of demeanor. We should not slam doors, nor be boisterous, nor uncouth, nor thoughtless of others. In every way we are to be gentle and kind and considerate, and not rude.

"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE"

Those who are begotten to the new nature should strive to be examples to everybody of what Christians ought to be. The kind of work we are engaged in should be honest. It may be secular work, yet it should be done as unto the Lord, carefully, faithfully, not merely as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as servants of God; "for we serve the Lord Christ." The walk of the Christian should be in charity--love--in sympathy, in benevolence, in kindness of word and conduct. A generally sympathetic spirit should pervade his words and deeds, his entire behavior. The Heavenly Father loved mankind; while they were yet sinners He so loved the race that He gave the choicest Treasure of His heart for man's recovery. And He still loves the world, and is fitting the Church to be the blessers of the world in the future. So any begotten of the Lord's Spirit should have a transforming influence at work in his life--an influence that will manifest itself even to those who are out of the way, those who have not yet been blessed with the Light of God.

Our text also reads: "Be thou an example in spirit." This phrase, "in spirit," is not found in the original, but the thought seems proper enough: we are to show kindness of spirit, of disposition, to all. The spirit that animates us at all times should be the spirit, the mind of the Lord.

We are exhorted to be examples "in faith." The Apostle's exhortation applies to us all. The Christian's faith is also manifested to others in his conduct, his words, his course in life. If he is full of faith, he will not be murmuring against the experiences of life as they come, against the providences of the Lord. The Almighty has accepted us as His children; we should have continual and

implicit confidence in Him, and whoever has true faith has this confidence. If any of us lack faith in God we shall not manifest faith to others, nor inspire faith in them.

We are to be examples "in purity." There is a purity that goes with all that pertains to God and to His Word-- a loftiness of standard, which is not to be found elsewhere. There are people in heathen lands who live more or less chaste lives, but there is nowhere so high a standard as in the Christian religion. Everything impure is contrary to God. Purity is one of the component elements of Christian character. As the Apostle said on another occasion, we are to be "first pure, then peaceable, gentle."

LIVING EPISTLES, KNOWN AND READ

In all these ways each of God's people should be living lessons, living epistles, wherever they go; they should be examples to the world. Whether the world believe what we preach or not, we should manifest these qualities which they cannot but approve and respect. This example will bear fruitage in due time, if not now. Every Elder, like Timothy, should be especially careful of his conduct, his words, his example. The Church has declared by choosing such a one Elder that they believe him to be an example of the fruitage of the grace of God in the heart.

The Apostle's counsel to Timothy: "Let no man despise thy youth," should be looked upon as advice not only to Timothy, but to all Elders of the Church who are young in years, that they so conduct themselves as to be

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examples of the Flock, that their deportment and ability to "rightly divide the Word of Truth" be such that none will have cause to slight the Message they bring, or to think of them as immature and unfit to lead the Flock of God.

Let every child of God, the younger as well as the older, strive to be an example worthy of imitation--an example of earnest, faithful endeavor to copy the Master in his daily life, a pattern of active zeal in the service of our God. We shall not be able while in the flesh to be examples in the full sense of the ultimate glory and beauty of holiness which will be ours beyond the veil: we cannot expect this in the present life. Our Lord alone was such a Pattern.

The Apostle Paul urged, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1.) St. Paul was a noble example of earnest endeavor to attain the perfect likeness of Christ, and his love, his zeal, his intense earnestness in striving to copy the Master and to accomplish His will should be an inspiration to us all. Let each of the Lord's children, individually, realize his or her personal responsibility. We are as "a city set upon a hill." Let each ask himself the question: Am I "an example of the believers"?

"HE THAT IS BEGOTTEN OF GOD DOES NOT PRACTISE SIN"

"My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous."--1 John 2:1.

ACCORDING to history the Apostle John at the time of writing this Epistle was quite an aged man. He was the last of the Apostles to die, according to tradition. In his ripe age he had naturally a tender, fatherly feeling toward all the Church; he had become very mellow in character through his experiences.

According to the original, our text would more properly read: "My darlings, these things write I unto you." The translators have taken the liberty of saying "little children" instead. A little child is always considered a darling.

St. John was especially spoken of as "the disciple whom Jesus loved"; this is the Apostle's own testimony. He seemed to be of a peculiarly loving disposition, combined with great force of character. And now as his pilgrimage neared its close, his heart went out in loving solicitude toward God's "little children." He had, in the chapter preceding our text, been pointing out that sin is a trait or quality of perversity which affects all. The Apostle declared that if any man say that he has no sin, he deceives himself--he is a liar, and makes God a liar. We are all sinners, as facts and Scripture testify. St. John thus impresses upon us that if we say we have no sin, we are displeasing to God, who is pleased to have us acknowledge our sins and apply for cleansing, seeking to put away sin so far as possible.

The Apostle says: "These things I write unto you that ye sin not." He does not say: Yes, we are all sinners --we cannot help it--and must continue in sin. No! But he says: Realizing that you commit trespasses which are contrary to the desire of your heart, remember that there is a place to go, a Mercy Seat, where you may confess your sins and obtain forgiveness. Remember that "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." Remember that He gave Himself a Ransom-price for all, and that the merit of this price was applied by imputation on our behalf. Remember that all the sins of the flesh are forgivable through faith in His blood. Bear this in mind, too, that He knows that with our imperfect flesh we cannot as New Creatures do perfectly, and it is because of this that God has constituted Him our Advocate and Head over all things.

OUR HIGH PRIEST GRANTS ABSOLUTION

Our Father knows that we all come short on account of the weaknesses of the flesh. Jesus laid down His life to absolve us from sin and to restore us to the Father, and He has appeared in the presence of God as the Advocate for all those who, during this Gospel Age, turn away from sin and consecrate their lives to His service. Thus we see that the righteousness of Christ, through the great offering for sin which He made (His own body of flesh), is the basis for the forgiveness of our sins. And the blessing and privilege of going to the Throne of Grace for mercy and pardon for daily shortcomings is ours because we are the children of God, because we have come into the relationship of sons. We have a standing with the Father through the imputed merit of Jesus. Jesus does not advocate for others than the people of God. It is not the Father's purpose that He shall advocate for the world; God's dealing with the world will be quite different.

The One who is now our Advocate will soon take the Church class to Himself. As the great Priest after the Order of Melchizedek, He will then reign over the world for a thousand years--not as Advocate, but as Mediator between God and fallen man. He will do a work of restitution for the world during this reign of a thousand years, and will bring up to perfection all who will avail themselves of the privileges and blessings granted during that period. At the close of the Millennium, when mankind are perfected, Messiah will turn them over to the Father: they will not need a Mediator after they have become perfect. So we see the difference between the Advocacy of Christ for the Church and His future work as Mediator for the world of mankind.

SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS HARMONIZED

The Apostle John in this same Epistle says: "He that is begotten of God sinneth not." How can this be true? Is the Apostle contradicting himself? Does he here say that "he that is begotten of God sinneth not," and does he say in our text that there is danger of our sinning? And again, that we would be lying if we denied that we have sin? What does he mean by the statement, "He that is begotten of God sinneth not"?

We reply that that which is begotten of God is the New Creature--the holy will, the new soul. But this New Creature has only the mortal body in which to operate; God promises to give a new body to the New Creature in the resurrection. In the meantime, however, he is required to live under the present imperfections of the human body, and by his good fight against the weaknesses and sins which are entrenched in his flesh he will show either his loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness or his disloyalty. If he be overtaken in a fault, either through ignorance or through temptation which he cannot control, it will not be sin on the part of the New Creature,

but an infirmity of the flesh. Nevertheless, he must go to God for forgiveness for these trespasses.

But the New Creature sinneth not--he "does not practise sin"--as the Emphatic Diaglott translates this passage. He who loves sin will sin; he who does not love sin will

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not sin wilfully. He might be entrapped through his weak flesh, or fall into a snare of the Adversary, but this would be unintentional on his part. And Jesus, our Advocate, will intercede for such sins, but not for deliberate sin. Jesus did not die for wilful sins of the New Creature, but for sins due to the fall--Adamic sin. So if any sin wilfully as a New Creature, he perishes thereby. Our first life was in Adam; our first death was the Adamic death. When we accepted Christ and the New Creature was begotten, our second life was begun. Now if such a one should be guilty of wilful sin, he would no longer have any standing whatever before God; he would again come under the sentence of death--the Second Death.

SLACKNESS IN THE NEW CREATURE

We might remark here, incidentally, that sometimes there is a kind of mixed condition; the New Creature has been slack in guarding against temptation, and has yielded with some degree of culpability. To the extent that the New Creature has been derelict, negligent, the face of the Lord will be darkened to him. If the flesh start to do

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wrong, the new will is not to consent to, or allow the wrong. The New Creature is to mortify, put to death, the flesh. To whatever extent he is slack in this matter, to that extent it is sin. A full sin would be a full consent of the new will, a full turning away from God.

But the flesh might have certain desires and temptations, and there might occur a partially wilful sin. In such a case stripes would be administered in proportion to the wilfulness. Such an individual might get into a place where he would be spiritually sick, so that the Lord would entirely shut him off from the light of His countenance. The Apostle James points out that the only proper action then would be for the individual to apply to the Elders of the Church, the seniors of the Church, the spiritually minded ones, that they go with him to the Throne of Grace in order that he might obtain mercy and be reinstated.

Seniors, spiritually minded ones not Elders, might do this service for the one who is sick, but preferably it should be the chosen Elders of the Congregation. This course would be a very humiliating one for the sin-sick brother, but such action might save that soul from death by a proper humbling of self "under the mighty hand of

God." Thus such a one might be recovered and become again a true child of God.

CHRISTIAN, WALK CAREFULLY!

If we realize that through lack of proper watchfulness, or through some infirmity of the flesh, we have taken a wrong step, contrary to the Lord's will and to our interests as New Creatures in Christ, let us lose no time in retracing the step and in calling upon the Father for forgiveness. "We have an altar whereof they have no right to partake who serve the [typical] tabernacle"; an altar not sanctified by the blood of bulls and goats, but by the precious blood of Christ; and we are urged to "come boldly [with holy courage and confident faith] to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 13:10; 4:16.) How blessed this Throne of Grace, this Mercy Seat, provided by our Father's love! How undone we should be without it! Yet, beloved, let us walk with great carefulness--let us never presume upon the mercy of our God by being careless of our steps. Let us, instead, with earnest prayer and watchfulness, "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," while our Father "worketh in us both to will and to do His good pleasure."--Philippians 2:12,13.

"Christian, walk carefully! oft wilt thou fall,
If thou forget on thy Savior to call.
Safe shalt thou walk through each trial and snare,
If thou art clad in the armor of prayer!"

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FAITHFULNESS TO OPPORTUNITIES

--JULY 26.--LUKE 19:11-27.--

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."--Matthew 25:21.

WE ARE NOT to confound the Parable of the Pounds with the Parable of the Talents. They teach totally different lessons. In the case of the talents, the amount given to each of the servants differed. In the case of the pounds, it was the same--each servant received one pound--approximately sixteen dollars. This parable, therefore, deals with something that is common to all of the class to which reference is made.

The object in the giving of the parable is stated in the lesson. The Lord and His disciples were approaching Jerusalem, where shortly He was to be crucified. The

disciples had supposed, on the contrary, that the Messianic Kingdom would immediately be established in power and great honor. This parable was intended to inform them that a considerable period of time would elapse before the Kingdom would be established.

The disciples knew that the kings of Palestine were appointed by the Roman Emperor, and they had recently had an experience along this line, when one of the Herods went to Rome, seeking an appointment to a kingdom. Some who hated him sent a message to Rome, discrediting him and declaring their preference for another king. Jesus seized this circumstance as an illustration in His own case. He was the Appointee for the Messianic Kingdom of the world; but He would go to Heaven itself and there appear in the presence of the Heavenly Father, the great Overlord or Emperor of the Universe. He would be invested by the Father with the ruling authority, and later return to earth and exercise His dominion.

This is exactly the presentation of the matter given us prophetically. (Psalm 2:8.) The Divine regulation is that Messiah, after finishing His work, shall in Heaven itself make application for a Kingdom which Divine providence has already arranged for and which Divine prophecy has already foretold. "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession."

"OCCUPY TILL I COME"

During the interim of the Master's absence--in Heaven, waiting for Divine investiture with the government of earth--He has committed to His disciples, His servants, otherwise styled His brethren, one pound each. He has left them with full liberty to use their best judgment and to show their love and their zeal in His service. At His return, all these servants will be reckoned with, and the degree of their zeal and efficiency as servants will be manifested by the results; and the rewards given them will be proportionate.

The parable distinguishes between these consecrated servants of God and the masses of the people. It shows that nothing is committed to the masses of the people; and that no judgment, reward, is made in their case at

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the return of the Master as King. Only to His servants did He give the pounds--only His servants had the responsibility of those pounds, and only those servants will be reckoned with or held responsible, either for reward or for punishment in respect to the matter.

In considering what is signified, or symbolized, by the pound, we must keep in memory the fact that as the same amount was given to each, the fulfilment must show some blessing or responsibility given in each case alike to all of God's consecrated people--all who are His servants.

There is but one thing that we can think of that is given to all of the Lord's people in exactly the same measure. They have not talents and opportunities alike, but, on the contrary, very unlike. Some have more and some less wealth; some more and some less mental capacity; some more and some less of favorable or unfavorable environment. None of these varied talents belong to this Parable of the Pounds.

The pound is the same to all; it represents justification. The one thing which the Redeemer does for all who become His followers is to justify them freely from all things. This leaves them all on exactly an even footing; for justification makes up to each individual in proportion as he is deficient--in proportion as he by nature is short of perfection, the Divine standard.

"BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH"

All who in the present time become children of God, servants of God, followers of Christ, must receive from the Lord, as a basis for this relationship, the pound--the free forgiveness of sins--justification. On this basis he has a standing with God, and whatever he may do or endeavor to do will be to his credit. Because all are alike qualified by justification, the results will show the degree of loving zeal controlling each servant. Those who love much will serve much. Those who love little will neglect to use their opportunities. As one in the parable gained ten pounds, so such noble characters as St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John and others, sacrificed themselves over and over again in the Divine service. In their zeal they counted all earthly things but as loss and dross, that they might be pleasing to their Master, the coming King.

These, and such as these, who have gladly spent themselves zealously in the service of the Lord, are to have the highest rewards, as represented by the Lord's words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Because thou wast faithful in a very little have thou authority over ten cities." In the parable another came, reporting a gain of five pounds. He had not done so well as did the first, but he had done well. He received the same commendation: he had been faithful, although less faithful than the first. He received his master's "Well done," however; but the reward was less--dominion over five cities. This will mean a less influential place in the Messianic Kingdom.

Then came a servant saying, "Lord, here is the pound that you gave me; I have kept it carefully laid up in a napkin." This represents a class that say, "I endeavored to maintain my justification. I endeavored to live justly and honorably, but I did not sacrifice myself. I am glad to be able to say that I have lost nothing. I was really afraid to use my opportunity, to use my privilege; for I realized that You would be expecting considerable return

from the amount which You gave me."

The master in the parable addresses this one still as a servant, but a wicked servant, who knew his master's will, who had undertaken his service, but who had been found unfaithful in respect to it. Had he not professed to be a servant, he would have received no pound and would have had no responsibility for it. He should have made use of his privilege and opportunity. He should have lived for his master. If not so actively and so directly as did the others, he should have made at least some use of the pound entrusted to him, so that he would have had some results to show.

We may assume that this one represents a considerable class of those who have entered into a covenant with the Lord to be His servants, and who have received justification at His hands, but who have neglected to comply with their engagements for self-sacrifice in His service. This neglect indicates their lack of loving zeal; and all this means that they will not be fit for a share in the Kingdom. This class is referred to on several occasions by the Lord: for instance, they are represented in the foolish virgins, who failed to enter in to the wedding; and so these will fail to become members of the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

"SAVED SO AS BY FIRE"

The same class seems to be pictured by St. Paul when, speaking of the same testing of the Church in the end of this Age, he declares, "The fire of that Day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." He proceeds to say that those who build with gold, silver and precious stones will suffer no loss, but will receive a full reward; while others building upon the same Rock, Christ Jesus--the same justification by faith--will suffer the loss of all their time and opportunity. He adds, however, that they themselves shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

This we understand to mean that this class of servants who maintain their justification, seeking to live harmless, honest lives, but who fail to sacrifice as they have covenanted to do, will not be lost, in the worst sense of that word. They will indeed lose the great prize--the highest blessing--the Kingdom; but because they still remain servants and have a love for righteousness they will be saved so as by fire; that is, through tribulations. They will ultimately gain everlasting life on the spirit plane, but will be quite inferior to the Bride class. They seem to be represented in the Scriptures as the virgins, the Bride's companions, who follow her.--Psalm 45:14.

These seem again to be pictured in Revelation, Chapters 14 and 7. Here the elect Church are referred to as 144,000, who will stand on Mount Zion, because they followed the Lamb whithersoever He went. Then a great multitude is pictured as coming through great tribulation, washing their robes and attaining a place before the Throne, instead of on the Throne. To these are given palm branches, instead of crowns. They are victors, but

not "more than conquerors." In this respect they are not wholly copies of God's dear Son, and are not esteemed worthy of being members of His Bride class, who are to share with Him the honors and glories and services in His Kingdom, as set forth in this parable.

The fear expressed by this servant, saying, "For I feared thee," reminds us of the Apostle's words respecting this same class. He declares that Christ at His Second Coming will deliver those who all their lifetime were subject to bondage through fear of death. The consecration of the Lord's servants is unto death, and those who fear death are fearful of performing their covenant vow. They will not be worthy of the Lord's approval as faithful servants. Nevertheless, there are many vessels in the house of the King--some to more honor and some to less honor.--2 Timothy 2:20,21.

"THOSE MINE ENEMIES"

Not until first He shall have finished dealing with His own servants at His Second Coming will the glorious Messiah begin to deal with the world, and especially with His enemies. This is the statement of the parable, and it is borne out by numerous Scriptures. When Jesus prayed

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on the night before His crucifixion, He said: "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; word." (John 17:9,20.) Thus we see the work of the Gospel Age outlined by our Lord. It is merely for the selection of His servants, and the testing and proving of these. It is with a view to determining which of them will be found worthy of association with Himself in the great Millennial Kingdom which God has decreed, and whose work will be for the blessing and uplifting of the whole world of mankind.

So the Second Psalm points out that the Redeemer will not pray for, ask for, the world until, at His Second Advent, He is ready to establish His Kingdom, His Church having first been gathered to glory. Then He will ask for the heathen. By the term heathen, or Gentile, is signified all out of fellowship with God, "enemies through wicked works." The Psalm proceeds to say that Messiah will deal rudely with the heathen. "He will dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel," etc. This, interpreted by other Scriptures, means that the inauguration of Messiah's Kingdom will bring a great Time of Trouble, symbolically styled fire, or fiery judgments. "He shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance." Everything appertaining to present institutions contrary to the Divine standards of justice will be rudely shaken and eventually destroyed.

However, the Lord wounds that He may heal. The lessons of the Time of Trouble will be salutary; as we read, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."

These judgments will not in any sense continue upon all throughout the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom, but will be inflicted only upon those deserving them. Hence the judgments will be especially severe at the beginning. All who learn righteousness will thereby deliver themselves; and as they come into harmony with the King of kings and Lord of lords, blessings will be their portion, uplifting them gradually to human perfection.

"SLAY THEM BEFORE ME"

At first thought, we might gather that these words signify that the King of Glory will be implacable, ferocious, unsympathetic, with His enemies. We might wonder how this shows sympathy! He admonishes us to love our enemies and to do good to them that despitefully use us. Gradually we come to see that this will indeed be the policy which the great King will pursue. He will be doing the greatest good for His enemies in bringing upon them punishments for their wrong course--shame, publicity, contempt. These things will be necessary to arouse them to an appreciation of their true condition and show them their privileges.

We are not to forget that during this Age the Lord's dealings with His faithful servants has been in permitting fiery trials to try them and to instruct them. It should not be a wonder to us therefore that fiery judgments upon the world are the Master's design, not for the world's injury, but for its blessing. We read that as a result of St. Peter's preaching at Pentecost the truths struck home to the hearts of his hearers--"They were cut to the heart." But we realize that this was a great blessing, in that it prepared them for the Message of Divine Mercy. So here we read of the Lord's slaying His enemies; they will be cut to the heart. A picture of this slaughter is given us in Revelation, where the Lord is represented in glorious majesty, with a sword proceeding out of His mouth, that with it He should smite the nations. (Revelation 19:15.) Blessed smiting! The sooner it begins, the better for the world, we might say; and yet we remember that God's time is best for everything.

Another similar picture of the progress of Messiah's Kingdom is given us in figurative language, as follows: "Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Thou Most Mighty, with Thy glory and Thy majesty. Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things. Thine arrows shall be sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies; whereby the people shall fall under Thee."--Psalm 45:3-5.

Here the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom with power, great glory and majesty, is presented in pictorial imagery; and the sharp arrows of Divine Truth are represented as slaughtering the hosts of error. This terrible carnage will mean a great blessing; for the Lord smites to heal, and when His Word cuts to the heart the effect is to destroy the enemy. Unless the enemies of the Lord be thus brought into subjection to Him, nothing will remain

for them but the final extinction mentioned by St. Peter: "It shall come to pass that the soul that will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people."--Acts 3:23.

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CHRIST'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

--AUGUST 2.--MARK 11:1-11.--

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee."--ZECHARIAH 9:9.

THE MESSAGE of John the Baptist was, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." This same message Jesus bade His disciples carry from village to village throughout Palestine. This same message was the burden of His preaching and the theme of His parables. Finally, at the close of His ministry, the Kingdom came to the Jewish nation in the sense that it was offered to them--it was theirs for the accepting. Today's lesson tells of the formal offer of the Kingdom by Jesus and of the neglect of the Jews as a people to accept it. Thus "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not"--except a few. His own nation rejected Him, and five days later crucified Him. A little later, at Pentecost, a few who received Him were begotten of the Holy Spirit and became the nucleus of Spiritual Israel, in preparation for the glorious Kingdom and the work which is to be accomplished at His Second Advent.

On the evening preceding the story of this lesson, Jesus and His disciples were at Bethany, the guests of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, who had prepared a special feast for Jesus, whom they loved so dearly. This was the Lazarus whom He had awakened from the sleep of death but a short time before. The feast took place at the close of the Jewish Sabbath day. The next morning corresponded to our Sunday, the first day of the week.

THE CRISIS OF ISRAEL'S EXPERIENCE

In preparation for presenting Himself as King, Jesus sent two of His disciples for an ass's colt, telling them where they would find it, and instructing them to say that it would be returned after the Master had used it. By the time the colt arrived, a considerable multitude had gathered--people of the village of Bethany and others who had come out from Jerusalem, about two miles distant, to see Jesus and to see Lazarus, upon whom the notable miracle had been wrought. It had long been the custom of the kings of Israel to ride to their coronation

upon an ass; and the multitude seemed to enter into the spirit of this occasion and to realize what it meant that Jesus was about to ride into Jerusalem on this colt. It signified that finally He was ready to assume the office of King.

For some time the disciples had recognized Him as the Messiah, the glories of whose Reign they were to share; and the multitude in general had learned to so regard Him, saying, "When Messiah cometh, will He do greater works than this man?"--could we expect anything more of Messiah than we see being accomplished by this man Jesus? But this was the first time Jesus had formally put Himself forward. On previous occasions, when they had sought to take Him by force to make Him a king, He had withdrawn Himself, realizing that the time was not yet come. Now, so far from withdrawing, He was taking the active part, sending for the colt, preparing for the triumphal ride to the capital of the nation as its King.

We may be sure that the hearts of the Apostles thrilled with excitement as they thought of the nearness of their Master's glory and of their own share in it; for as yet they did not realize the full import of His words to the effect that He must be crucified and must depart to a "far country," even Heaven itself, and be invested with authority, and later return to establish the Kingdom which would bless the world.

Jesus, however, was fully aware that the presentation of Himself as King was a formal matter, fulfilling the prophecy and leaving the nation of Israel without excuse.

If, when He entered the city, the people should rise en masse, acknowledge Him and acclaim Him, then indeed they would be in line with the Divine requirements which would bring them the greatest of all blessings. But Jesus knew that prophecy had already declared that He would be despised and rejected, and that His own people would hide their faces from Him in shame. (Isaiah 53:3.)

The journey and the preparation for it, therefore, meant something very different to Jesus from what it signified to the disciples and the multitudes.

"THE STONES WOULD CRY OUT"

When the ass arrived, some of the people put their garments upon it in lieu of a saddle; Jesus mounted, and the procession began. Some went before Him, and some followed after. The people were familiar with the prophecy relating to Messiah's coming, which declared, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! behold, thy King cometh unto thee; He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass." They were familiar also with the

"shout" the prophets had foretold and the responses--one party crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Again came the cry, "Blessed be the Kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Then the response, "Hosanna in the highest!" These different expressions are recorded by the different evangelists.

But not all were enthusiastic acclaimers of Jesus; a discordant note was heard. Some of those who had come from the city through curiosity criticised the shouting, and wondered why Jesus did not rebuke the people for ascribing so great honor to Him. They sent word to this effect to Jesus through His disciples. Jesus made answer that a great prophecy was being fulfilled. The Prophet Zechariah had by inspiration said, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem"! and such a shout must be made. Jesus declared that if the multitudes had failed to shout, the prophecy would still have been fulfilled--the very stones would have cried out.

THE FIRST PALM SUNDAY

It is customary with some Christians in various parts of the world to commemorate especially that Sunday of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The record tells that on the journey many of the people strewed their garments in the way, as a mark of respect and honor, waiting until the little animal had passed over them, and then running on before and placing them again. Others brought ferns, flowers and grasses, and strewed them in the way. Still others, St. John's Gospel tells us, brought branches of palm trees.

It was a jubilant procession, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah. Yet to Jesus it had the sad feature, as indicated by the account. When they had reached the turn of the Mount of Olives, which brought Jerusalem into view, the Master halted the procession while He looked over the city and wept, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your House is left unto you desolate; and verily I say unto you, Ye shall see Me no more, until that Day [nearly nineteen centuries later] when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of Jehovah!"

Jesus realized that that day was a turning point with the Jewish nation--that their rejection of Him meant their rejection by the Heavenly Father for a long time. It meant that they would be cast off from Divine favor, except a few who would become His disciples. It meant that during those long centuries the highly favored people of Abraham's natural seed would be in distress. It meant that the favor of God, which had been with them for centuries, would instead be extended to the Gentiles, to gather

out of the Gentiles a company of faithful, saintly ones to be associates and joint-heirs with Jesus and the faithful ones of the Jews in the Heavenly Kingdom. It meant that not until this elect, Heavenly, spiritual Kingdom class should be received to glory would the Jewish people be again received into fellowship with God.

St. Paul markedly calls our attention to this fact that the rejection of Israel is not permanent, but only for a time--only until the complete number of faithful saints be gathered out from amongst the Gentiles. Then God's favor will return to Natural Israel, and subsequently extend to all the families of earth.--Romans 11:25-32.

JESUS, THE PRINCE OF PEACE

How different was this entry of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, from the triumphal marches of earthly conquerors and kings! In the excitement of human passion and the prejudice of human minds a special halo of glory has surrounded the world's conquerors. Heroic deeds, valiant conquests, as pictured by historians have a charm. The rising generation reads with thrilling interest of the prowess of Alexander the Great, of the Spartans of Greece, of the Caesars of Rome, and in more modern times of Robert Bruce, of Napoleon and Wellington, of Generals Grant and Lee, Sherman and Johnson, Sheridan and Stewart. The home-comings of all of these were triumphal marches, in many cases rendering honor to whom honor was due.

Nevertheless, in every instance the mind's eye necessarily closes against scenes which led up to such triumphs. We try to forget the millions of slain and wounded, and other millions of mourning widows and orphans. We try to forget the smoking ruins of homes behind those victorious armies. However necessary war at times may seem to be for the maintenance of justice, nevertheless

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all must concede that the blessings purchased by the sword are procured at a terrible cost.

From this viewpoint Jesus, the Prince of Peace, followed by an army of saints who are walking in His footsteps, presents a beautiful picture--even to the worldly. These victors--Leader and followers--conquer by dying. Thus Jesus said to His followers, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's shall find it." Thus viewed, all the followers of the Lamb are self-sacrificers, as the Bible declares: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God--your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1.) Such a victory--victory through death--is difficult for the majority of people to understand! What is the philosophy of it? Where is the victory?

VICTOR-KINGS THROUGH DYING

Well may it be asked, Wherein is the victory of Christ and His followers in laying down their lives for the brethren and in support of truth and righteousness? Only the Bible answers the question, and only those who exercise faith can understand the Bible answer. The Bible declares that the real victory of Christ and the Church is over self. Their crowning day is future--their triumph will be then.

The triumphal entry of Jesus on the ass was only typical. The antitype will be glorious--beyond the veil. As Jesus after His resurrection was "received up into glory," so also He has promised His Church that their resurrection shall change them from imperfect human beings to perfect spirit beings, joint-heirs with their Master, their Redeemer, in the glorious Millennial Kingdom which is to bless the world.

After Jesus had risen from the dead, He explained to His perplexed disciples what His death signified, saying, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things [death] and to enter into His glory?" (Luke 24:26.) So St. Paul has declared in respect to all who will be Jesus' associates in the Kingdom--they must suffer with Him if they would reign with Him; they must be dead with Him if they would live with Him. (2 Timothy 2:12.) Christ and His Church die to human hopes and interests, present and everlasting--laying down their lives, suffering for righteousness' sake. Their reward is two-fold: (1) Their own personal exaltation to a Heavenly, spirit glory, like unto the angels, and yet more glorious--"far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named." (2) The Kingdom glory--the joy of being the Divine agents for human restoration.

From this, the Bible viewpoint, the Christian warfare is different from every other warfare known to the world. It is a fight against sin, a fight against self-will, a full submission to the Divine will, a victory through death. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2:10.) "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His Throne." (Revelation 3:21.) No wonder that a proposition of this kind is but imperfectly understood by the world! "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not." And this is one of the requirements of the Gospel, that Jesus and His followers shall submit themselves to be misunderstood by the world. We are counted fools for Christ's sake.--1 Corinthians 4:10.

It requires some stamina to be a loyal follower in the footsteps of Jesus, misunderstood as He was misunderstood by those of His day, reviled as He was reviled. "They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake." It is only when we understand through God's promises that in these trying experiences of Christ and His followers there is a glorious purpose, that we are able

to endure them with any measure of rejoicing. Only these are granted of the Lord the eye of faith which can clearly discern things beyond the veil--the glory, honor and immortality, and the Kingdom which the Lord has promised to His faithful followers.

"THE WRATH OF THE LAMB"

Since Jesus is the Prince of Peace, how shall we understand various passages of Scripture which refer to Him as a mighty Conqueror in blood-stained garments, taking vengeance on His foes? But especially, how shall

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we understand the declaration that, at His coming in the clouds of heaven, all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of Him?

Of this Prince of Peace it may be said that He will wound to heal, that whatever disasters He may bring or permit to come upon the world will be so overruled as to make of them blessings in disguise. Undoubtedly much that is said respecting our Lord is highly symbolic. For instance, He is to smite the nations with the Sword that proceedeth out of His mouth--the Word, or Message, of Truth. Such a smiting is in full conformity with the declaration that when St. Peter preached the Gospel at Pentecost, some of his hearers were "cut to the heart"--not with St. Peter's literal sword, but with "the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Eventually, that Sword will smite all opponents of righteousness for their good. Only the wilfully wicked will eventually be destroyed in the Second Death.

We are not to forget, however, that the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom is to be in the midst of the Time of Trouble, and that Christ will have to do with the bringing, or at least the permitting, of that Trouble. Apparently mankind will be permitted to bring the great trouble at the end of this Age upon themselves. There are forces of evil, Satan and his angels, ready to do us harm and, through human forces, sin-forces entrenched in human nature, ready to do harm to the social fabric. The Bible represents that Divine Power holds these in check --the four angels holding the four winds--that they shall not blow upon the earth to its injury until the appointed time, until all of God's elect Church shall have been sealed in their foreheads--their intellect--with the Truth.

At the appropriate time those "winds" of strife will be let loose, and great will be the trouble, until in due time the King of kings and Lord of lords shall intervene to rescue the race from itself and from the Adversary. Then Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, and Messiah's Kingdom shall be established for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

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PREPARED HEARTS

FRANCES DARDEN.

Prepare our hearts to know Thee, Lord,
And seek for wisdom in Thy Word,
So, as our days, our strength may be,
To spread Thy Truth, o'er land and sea.
O'er all the earth this light must shine,
Restoring faith to all mankind.

Run swiftly, oh! ye angel "feet,"
Upon the mountains; tidings sweet
Send forth! Proclaim the Word,
So men shall know their reigning Lord.
Earnest watch, on Zion's wall,
Lift high His banner over all;
Loud sound the Seventh Trumpet call!

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SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

QUERIES OF A COLPORTEUR

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

How shall we do respecting the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES after October, 1914? Will the Society continue to publish them? Will the Colporteurs and others continue to circulate them? Is it right to circulate them now, since you have some doubt respecting the full accomplishment of all expected by or before October, 1914? With Christian love,

Your brother, M. F. C.

IN REPLY

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:--

Yours of May 20th has reached me. Thanks! I think that you are not taking a right view of the matter treated in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. II. It is our thought that these books will be on sale and read for years in the future, provided the Gospel Age and its work continue.

So far as the features are concerned, we have merely set forth the Scriptures and our view respecting their application and significance. We have not attempted to say that these views are infallible, but have stated the processes of reasoning and figuring, leaving to each reader the duty and privilege of reading, thinking and figuring for himself. That will be an interesting matter a hundred years from now; and if he can figure or reason better, he will still be interested in what we have presented. In any event, we think that the consummation cannot be long deferred.

To cease to print and circulate the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

because everything suggested therein has not been, apparently, fulfilled, would be like rejecting our Common Version of the Bible because the chronology given in the margin throughout is known to be incorrect to the extent of a number of years. Usher's chronology is used in our Common Version, and shows the birth of Christ in the year 4004. Scholars are agreed that the event varied at least two years from that date--some say four years. And STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES show from the Bible that the date was actually 4128. Nobody thinks of throwing away his Bible on this account. No more need any one think of throwing away his STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES or failing to circulate them on account of the fact that October, 1914, may not witness all that we had expected and in the manner expected. With much Christian love,
Your brother and servant in the Lord.

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AN OCCASION FOR REJOICING

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:--

You have had my continuous love and prayers for a good many years, but I have not written you personally for quite awhile, knowing of the pressure of the Harvest work upon your time. But knowing that you would be much pleased to hear of the wonderful demonstration of the Truth that I have just witnessed, I write you this brief account:

Brother Petran, wife and I have just returned from Osseo, Wis., where Brother J. M. Kidd's whole family, sons, daughters, son-in-law and daughter-in-law, numbering thirteen, have consecrated and been baptized, except one, who was unable to symbolize on account of sickness, but is coming to Appleton before long, D.V., to symbolize.

Dear Brother, I never saw a more happy family and a more loving and sincere demonstration of an appreciation of the Truth and of the brethren as they embraced each other and wept for joy and gladness. They are all in deep earnest and thoroughly understand the steps they have taken. All have taken the Vow also. They also organized a class with regularly appointed officers and set the time of their Berean, praise and testimony meetings, etc.

A Brother Davis, Brother Kidd and his sister, Sister Blakeley, have been witnessing hereabout for the Truth for a great many years without much apparent result, until after Sister Blakeley's death, just a few weeks ago. Brother Petran, of the Appleton class, accompanied me and assisted in the funeral service, after which three of the friends consecrated themselves to the Lord on the train on their way home. When they arrived there the influence of the Holy Spirit spread among their friends and relatives and the result is we have already immersed twenty-three.

At the last talk at Osseo, the evening before we left, about sixteen of the neighbors were present at our meeting, at the close of which we asked if they would be willing, for the sake of the Truth, to give their attention, their time, their reputation, their friends, their money, and life itself, as the

service might require of them? At each of these questions a number of them gave their assent, which, if fully understood, means a complete consecration to Christ. And so we are expecting to be called upon in the near future to perform another baptismal service. In fact, six more have expressed the desire to be baptized at the first opportunity.

I might add that the brethren have had quite a struggle with tobacco, but they have conquered and cast it out.

We rejoice with you in the Harvest work and pray God's blessing to continue with you until your work is done. Sister Deming joins me in sending much Christian love.

Your Brother in Christ, H. W. DEMING.--Wis.

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A SIGNIFICANT MESSAGE

DEAR FRIEND:--

As one who believes in "the Present Truth" as presented in *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, I venture to write to you for a word of advice and comfort. I am in deep distress and have suffered intense mental agony during the last few months through being careless of the privileges connected with Present Truth.

I came, through God's favor, into touch with the Truth ten years ago, and had great rejoicing in it. My fatal mistake was a lack of decisiveness and a consequent failure to act according to my conscience. I became timid and avoided my fellowmen because of my failure to speak out. Added to this I stumbled, time and again, through weakness of the flesh, and gradually settled down to the thought that success in the "narrow way" was not for me.

At the end of last year my interest in Volume One was revived and I argued that if it is true why should I fear to come out of Babylon? Acting upon this I sent for withdrawal letters. I had a talk with our minister here, but at the critical moment I gave way to fear. This plunged me into a blackness which I cannot describe; I imagined all sorts of things, chief amongst which was that I had committed the sin unto death. The thought of this made me worse, and I gave way to careless living.

Dear friend, I would give anything for a word of comfort! I have striven hard to find peace of mind. I would not trouble you, as I know you are fully occupied; but somehow my unhappiness compels me to write you, as I know you are in close fellowship with the Lord. I hope that you can help me. My soul is sadly diseased. I cannot express the gratitude I shall feel. God bless you! Yours sincerely,

T. H. HUGHES.--N. Wales.

OUR REPLY

DEAR BROTHER:--

Yours of the 28th ult. has come duly to hand and contents are noted. Frequently, "earth-born clouds arise" to obscure the Lord's face from us when we neglect to do those things

which He indicates would be pleasing to Him. Faithfulness to the Lord will restore a sense of His favor. My suggestion, therefore, is that you start anew, doing faithfully everything which you find to be His will for you.

The very fact that you are penitent and feel the separation is a good sign. Those who have sinned the sin unto death are not usually penitent. A rereading of the Six Volumes, laying hold upon the promises quoted therein, should be of help to you. May the Lord's guidance and blessing be with you as you seek to return to a condition of favor with Him. With much Christian love, we remain,

Yours in the Master's service.

THE CORRESPONDENCY SEEMS CLEAR

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Have often thought of writing you as to how far the type and antitype extend in the Harvest of the Jewish and Gospel Ages; particularly as to whether the time that the Roman army under Titus besieged Jerusalem and the length of the siege are types of the trouble coming on the world?

To my understanding the Harvest of the Jewish Age commenced in the fall of 29 A.D., and, being a period of forty years, ended in the fall of 69 A.D. In the spring of 70 A.D., at the time of the Passover, the Roman army besieged Jerusalem. The siege lasted about six months and ended in the fall of 70 A.D. Thus the great calamity that our Lord foretold to Jerusalem did not reach its worst until six months after the end of the Jewish Harvest, and continued about six months thereafter, or one whole year after the end of the Jewish Harvest. This same period in antitype, if antitype it is, would seem to be from April, 1915, to October, 1915. If there is any significance in this it would seem that the burning of the "tares" in the Time of Trouble will not take place until the Harvest is entirely ended.

This may be reaching after types where none are intended. Will be thankful for any suggestion along this line.

Yours in the one hope, S. W. PENNOCK.

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OUR HOPE--"AN ANCHOR TO THE SOUL"

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

NEARLY ALL that God has given us as New Creatures is by faith or hope. When we become followers of Jesus and take up our cross to follow Him, a sacrifice is involved, if the step be taken intelligently--along the lines of Divine instruction and invitation. No one would voluntarily undertake to sacrifice unless he had a hope or a conviction of some blessing that would result or of some reward that would come to him as the outcome of that sacrifice. In every proper action there

must be a motive or object. The fact that the Church has been invited to follow Jesus indicates that there was something in His course which brought the blessing and favor of God--some special reward; and that if we will follow Him, we shall share that same blessing and reward --glory, honor and immortality.

So when we take up our cross to walk in our Master's footsteps, it implies that we are inspired with the hope of thus sharing in the glory and honor conferred upon Him. The character of our God assures us that any offer coming to us from Him, with rigid conditions attached, must be infinitely worthy of our acceptance; and the "exceeding great and precious promises" accompanying this offer assure us of His assistance and sustaining power. So by availing ourselves of His strength and of His aid, we shall be able to meet all the conditions and to attain the glorious reward set before us. Hence our faith has a strong and sure foundation upon which to rest; "faith can surely trust Him, come what may."

INWARD FAITH--OUTWARD CONFESSION

We exercise faith in the heart before we make an outward profession--before we confess the Lord with our mouth. And we have no right to confess Him with our mouth until we have believed "unto righteousness"; for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10.) So we have the declaration of the Lord that He will not consider that we have a proper faith or hope unless we confess it. He has declared that if we refuse or fail to confess Him before men, He will account us unworthy to be confessed before the Father and the holy angels. There is, then, no salvation without a confession of the Lord; the two are inseparable.

It is in vain that any entertain a hope of being accepted of the Lord and of winning His final approval who hides his light under a bushel and shrinks from the reproach of the Cross. "No cross, no crown," is the Lord's inflexible decision. All who have received the Truth in the love of it will be glad to let their light shine to the glory of God and the blessing of others. If the glorious Message of the Lord has filled our own hearts and blessed our lives, we shall rejoice to carry the living water to other thirsty souls. If the good seed has found our hearts fruitful soil, it will surely germinate and bring forth fruitage to the glory of our God.

In harmony with the terms of our consecration, we confess to men that we have a faith that reaches beyond the present life, a hope that "entereth into that within the veil," whither Christ, our Forerunner, has entered for us. We confess our hope that we shall have a part in His resurrection; that "we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and like Him be spirit beings, see Him as He is and share His glory on the Divine plane. We confess that we hope with Him to be

instruments in the Father's hands, bringing life and joy and blessing to all the world of mankind, the living and the dead; that we hope to uplift them from death, to raise them from all the sin and blight and sorrow and tears that have oppressed them for these six thousand years. Truly ours is a wonderful hope! Who would not rejoice to tell it!

If, then, we have this faith, this hope, and are properly confessing it before men, let us "hold fast." Tests of our loyalty will continually come. The flesh will be inclined to rebel strongly at times. The questions will present themselves: Are you willing to confess Christ? Are you ashamed to own His name before the world, or do you esteem this your chiefest honor? There will be temptations to become discouraged. Our weaknesses will rise up before us, and the Adversary will take advantage of these circumstances to further dishearten us. And not only will there come these temptations along the line of our faith and hope, but there will come certain reproaches and persecutions, permitted for the purpose of proving our loyalty. Ours is a marvelous calling, and only heroic souls are wanted to fill the places in this elect class--only those who have the Spirit of the Master.

DANGER OF WITHHOLDING THE LIGHT

If any are disloyal or weak, and fail to take a firm stand for the Lord and the Truth, for fear that they will be disesteemed amongst their fellow-men, or for any other reason, it will prove that they are not worthy to share with Christ the glories of His Throne as members of His Body. All who hope to be of this number have professed His Name; and they must be steadfast, must

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hold fast their confidence and profession of their faith even unto the end.

The flesh needs to be dealt with rigorously, and be brought into subjection and held there. According to the inclinations of the flesh, the Lord's children would wish to refrain from what would bring contumely and adverse criticism. The flesh would prefer to keep quiet, where the speaking forth of the Truth might bring reproach or persecution or ostracism. But the New Creature would feel "a burning fire shut up in his bones" if he were to withhold the Message of Truth when a suitable opportunity was granted, and he would find that he must be faithful and let his light shine. Otherwise, the light would grow feeble and would finally die out altogether, and he would be in utter darkness. And "if the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit of God which is within us. The Lord gives us a solid basis for our hope, for our faith. It is a hope which He has Himself inspired.

This hope is backed by all His sure promises and by His Oath; and He reminds us that "He is faithful that promised." (Hebrews 10:23.) It is as yet a promise only; it is all of faith. We have now but the begetting of the Holy Spirit to this new nature, and the sealing of the same Spirit, "the earnest of our inheritance." (Ephesians 1:13,14.) But we have learned to know our God and to trust His faithful Word. We have proven His gracious promises in many a time of stress and danger, and we know that He will not fail us. And "he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

OUR ANCHOR SURE AND STEADFAST

If we were to let go this hope, this anchor to our souls, we should be adrift upon a shoreless sea, whose mighty billows would sweep us down to eternal death. A great Time of Trouble is now about to break upon the whole world, and any of the Lord's people whose faith and hope are not firmly anchored to the Rock of Ages, any who are fearful to trust His promises, will be overwhelmed in the storm. Shall this be our experience?

"The Time of Trouble nears, 'it hasteth greatly,'
E'en now its ripples span the world-wide sea;
Oh, when its waves are swoll'n to mountains stately,
Will the resistless billows sweep o'er me?"

Some of the Lord's real children will have their part in the great trouble-time; yet none who are faithful, who are obedient, will suffer thus. These will be kept in perfect safety to the end of their course, and will, we believe, be gathered "within the veil" before the great storm breaks in its fury. Because of our faith in the Master, because of our strong confidence in Him, our knowledge that He has been an overcomer, and that the Father has rewarded Him and that He is now our Advocate, our great High Priest, who "ever liveth to make intercession for us," therefore our hearts have good courage. We know that He will shortly "stand up" in power and great authority to establish His Kingdom and to exalt all His faithful to reign with Him in that Kingdom; therefore our hope is firm; it is indeed an anchor to our souls. We are "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."--Ephesians 6:10.

We shall never lose our courage if we keep our eyes continually fixed on Him, and our hand closely clasped in His. God's eternal promises are the foundation upon which all that we hope, either of character, or of coming glory, is built. And what a strong foundation! Let us be faithful to Him who hath called us. Let us hold the glorious Truth not only in the letter, but also in the spirit. Let us hold it in the love of it, because it is the Truth, as well as because of its matchless beauty and grandeur.

Let us ever remember the importance of patient endurance,

constancy, that we may develop the fruits of the Holy Spirit, that we may take joyfully every trial, every persecution, every difficulty, which our God in His infinite Wisdom and Love may permit to come upon us for our testing and the ripening of that character which is of paramount importance, and without which we can never hope to see our Father's face, nor partake of the glory to which we have been called with Christ. Let us indeed "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful who hath promised." Let us "hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end." Yea, "we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope" unto death.--Hebrews 3:6; 10:23; 6:11.

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"Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
When the clouds unfurl their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift, or firm remain?"

Surely by the grace of God our anchor will hold; for

"We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll;
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Savior's love!"

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HOW AND WHERE SHALL I SERVE?

"Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."--1 Corinthians 7:24.

IN THE CONTEXT, the Apostle has been discussing marriage and its responsibilities. He has also been discussing slaves and their state. He asks, "Art thou called being a slave? Then seek not to be free." Nevertheless, he added that if freedom were to come to the slave, he should be glad to avail himself of the opportunity of having a wider field of service as a free man. But the slave should not say to His master: I have become a child of God, and therefore your regulations are nothing to me; you cannot longer hold me as a slave.

The Apostle gives the thought that the Lord's people are not to want an immediate change from the condition in which they were called. His thought is, You are not necessarily to think that you are to leave what you are now doing. Your business may be that of a servant, or

a slave; therein abide--in the sense of having your mind at rest. If the Lord opens the door, then you are to look about. If your condition is one of great severity, it is right to ask the Lord that in His own due time He will make it less so, if it please Him. He has promised us that with every temptation He will provide a way of escape or direct the issue, that we may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13.) This would apply to our business relationships--to everything.

If one were single, he should consider very carefully the matter of taking on added responsibilities. He should think: "I was called when single. Does the Lord wish me to marry?" And if he comes to the conclusion that the Lord so desires, he should remember the Apostle's injunction, "Only in the Lord." If he were married when called, he should not say, "I wish I were not married. I could do so much more, so much better, if not married." He was married when called, and therefore

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there is a mortgage upon his time. He has this mortgage or contract to consider.

ENTER OPEN DOORS, BUT DO NOT FORCE THEM

Nevertheless, the Apostle, in previous verses of this same chapter points out that if the unbelieving husband or wife should depart, let them do so. Do not seek to oppose their going if they desire to go. The Lord is able to provide for your affairs. And if that is the Lord's providence for you, so accept it. As for the thought of our leaving our business to go into the Colporteur work, or the Pilgrim work, or the Class Extension work, or whatever it might be, the proper thing for us to consider would be, Is this an opening of the Lord? If we find that a better opportunity for service comes to us in this way, a wider opportunity for work in the Harvest Field, and that there is an open door, then we should rejoice and should enter the door.

But if we find that there is no open door and we would have to force one open, to violate some right principle to enter such work, that would alter the case. We must stand for principle. We shall never have to oppose any right principle to engage in the Lord's service; there is always some way to serve. The Apostle is here addressing brethren, and his words could not refer to any who were then engaged in a dishonorable avocation.

NO BROTHER IN DISREPUTABLE BUSINESS

But suppose that a man, before receiving the Truth, had been the keeper of a gambling house, or were in some other disreputable business. Suppose he had been a saloon-keeper (several brethren have come from this business). After he had accepted the Truth, he would

say, Here! What am I doing? Am I dispensing to human beings that which is to their injury? I must quit this. And so he would have to get out of the saloon business before he could become a child of God at all; he would have to get out of the unprincipled condition of mind before he could become a child of God. The Apostle's words were addressed to the brethren: "Brethren, let every man so abide." He would not be a brother in Christ while in a business repugnant to his conscience and injurious to his fellow-creatures.

The whole matter was, of course, forceful to servants in the Apostle's day. In that time and in every time the humble classes, the servant classes, the slave classes, seem to have been ready to receive the Message. Our Lord said unto the rich, as a class, "Woe unto you rich!" And to the poor He said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden." And we see that not many wise, not many rich, not many noble, come into the Light.

BRETHREN IN PENAL INSTITUTIONS

A prisoner in a penal institution would do well to say to himself, "Well, in God's providence this Message has reached me here in prison. Perhaps I should never have had it if I had not been here." If we were such a person, instead of hastening to try to pry open the doors by sending a paper to petition release, we would consider well before we started such a paper. We would think, "Perhaps I may have opportunities for serving the Lord amongst these fellow-prisoners. Perhaps I may have an opportunity of preaching to them." Or if there were an application made for release, and if the application resulted in refusal, we should bow to that refusal as being the Lord's word in the matter. We would try to be thoroughly content and thoroughly happy, and would say, "I will strive to show forth the praises of God, who has called me out of darkness into His marvelous light." We could not know but that a man would have just as good opportunity for service there as anywhere else. The Lord will give what is best to all His faithful ones.

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ANOINTED--ESTABLISHED--SEALED

"Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us."--2 Cor. 1:21,22.

THE APOSTLE is here addressing the Church at Corinth, recognizing that this congregation are co-laborers with him--accepted of God as members of Christ, the Anointed. Christ is the great One foretold prophetically

as the antitypical Prophet, the antitypical Priest, the antitypical King, who is to bless the world by His work of healing, instructing, helping, uplifting. The Apostle says that the One who has brought us into the Body of the Anointed, and has set, or established us, is God. This implies that God does the calling of those who come to Him. It implies that there was a previous invitation --the Apostle says that no man taketh this honor to himself. Even Jesus could not have taken to Himself the honor of being a Priest and King; He could not say, I will be a Priest--I will be a King!

As God called Jesus to be the great Head over this Ecclesia, or Body, so through Jesus He has invited us to become its members. And as we conform to the terms and are made acceptable through our great Advocate, we are then set in the Body--anointed. It is not a happen-so, but we are set. And we shall continue in this position unless, because of some unfaithfulness, we shall be blotted out and the crown appropriated to us be taken away.

He who sets us, establishes us, and has anointed us of the Holy Spirit, and thus made us members of this holy company, is God, the Heavenly Father. It is not the province of even our Redeemer to set us and anoint us. As the Apostle says, "God hath set every member in the Body as it hath pleased Him." All things are of the Father, and all things are by the Son; hence this anointing that we receive comes from the Father. Nevertheless, the Channel is the Lord Jesus. This Holy Spirit which the Father has given to Jesus, He has shed forth upon us. The Father authorizes it, the Son sheds it forth.

SEALED IN THE MASTER'S LIKENESS

And God "hath also sealed us." It is not only important that we be begotten of the Holy Spirit, and set in the Body, but it is another precious thought that we are to be sealed, or impressed; we are to receive a stamp. As we would set a seal into wax to mould the wax into its likeness, so with us who are desirous of knowing and doing God's will; we are impressed by His Holy Spirit into the image of our dear Master; and the channel through which we are sealed is the Truth.

So those who are sealed by the Holy Spirit have a considerable measure of appreciation of the Truth. All the promises come through God's Word; it is a power that is now at work, so that all of God's people in all parts of the world are being impressed through the promises of God. God works in us to will and to do His good pleasure. This sealing is of the Father, because it is through His promises;

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it is under the direction and care of the Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus, that He may in due time present us blameless and unreprouvable before the Father.

"If I in Thy likeness, O Lord, may awake,
And shine a pure image of Thee,
Then I shall be satisfied when I can break
The fetters of flesh and be free."

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THE PURPOSE OF OUR TRIALS

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."--James 1:12.

THE WORD blessed in this text may be understood to signify the condition of one in the favor of God. The state of such will be a happy one, a desirable one. The word blessed does not, of course, always suggest a happy condition as relates to the feelings, or emotions, but rather as relates to the outcome. It is used here in connection with the results of trial to the Christian. The child of God who wins the crown of life will be very highly favored or blessed of God; then whatever conduces to this end is a very great blessing, even though it cause much pain to the flesh.

Who will gain this crown of life? Of what character will he be? The Scriptures declare that it will be that man or that woman who endures temptation, trial. What is signified by enduring temptation? Evidently the thought is not the enduring of one temptation for one time or for many times. Even the world must endure trials. The reference is to the retaining permanently of the attitude of patient endurance and faithfulness when tempted, of remaining true to God under temptation and stress. Temptations come from a variety of sources. They may come from friends, who may tempt us to live a life of more or less self-indulgence, to relax in a measure our fidelity to the Lord. The enticements of wealth or worldly society, a natural love of ease and disinclination of the flesh to endure hardness--any or all of these may prove strong and subtle temptations to the Christian.

But if we love the Lord supremely, that love will become the chief impulse of our lives. Our one aim will be that we may glorify God in our spirit and in our body. We know that there are things which are displeasing to God, and if we love Him we will seek to keep His commandments. The child of God might fail once, or he might fail repeatedly along the same line, until in deep humiliation and anguish of soul because of his continued manifestation of the same weakness, he would be led to cry out with strong crying and tears to the Lord; and his pain and distress of heart might so impress upon him his

need of greater watchfulness along that line that he would become strengthened for further attacks of the same nature, and thus be enabled to gain the victory over his besetment, his special weakness.

THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

While we shall never reach the point of perfection in the flesh, nevertheless this power to endure temptation should become more marked day by day, as the New Creature remains loyal, still resisting and striving still harder to resist and be true to the Lord in thought and word and deed. Blessed is the man who shall endure--time after time, day after day--thus proving his faithfulness and obedience to God. For when that man is tried, when the trial time is over, when God has seen that he has demonstrated fully his loyalty, then, when God's "due time" has come, that tried and proven one shall receive the crown of life.

The expression, "the crown of life," is another way of saying the reward of life; and this life is on the highest plane. The Apostle Paul speaks of this same crown as the "crown of righteousness." The Apostle Peter calls it the "crown of glory." It is the crown of righteousness because it is the reward that comes as the result of righteousness, of obedience to God and the principles of His Government, of faithfulness to our covenant. It is the crown of glory because it is the reward which brings glory, honor, immortality.

In the Grecian games certain rewards were given to those who endured successfully the trial of their skill, of their prowess and of their physical endurance. The reward given was usually a crown or wreath of laurel. That crown was valuable, not so much in itself, but especially as an outward token of appreciation of superior merit. The fact that it was evergreen would suggest to the Christian that our reward as "overcomers" will be a lasting reward, an eternal reward.

The Lord is to give us life in fullest measure. The penalty that came upon our race because of sin was death; but now there is an opportunity to regain life--life in perfection, untainted, unending. This life is in the Son of God. At the present time life can be gained only by being begotten to the spirit nature. The crown of life, to be given to the "more than conquerors," is a very special kind of life--immortality, the highest form of life possible, the crown, or pinnacle, of all life. This is to be the reward of the class called in Scripture the Bride of Christ, when they shall have demonstrated their faithfulness, when they shall have been proven worthy to be members of that exalted class.

There will be a crown of life in the next Age--perfect human life--as the result of obedience to the tests and trials of that time. These tests will differ in many respects from the trials and difficulties of the Church at the present time. They will be much less crucial; for then

temptations to sin from without will be removed, and bodily and mental uplifting and assistance granted, which will make their trial a more favorable one. Righteousness, too, will immediately be rewarded in that Day, and sin and disobedience of every kind will be promptly punished. But now righteousness often brings suffering, reproach, pain and loss, from the human standpoint; while sin often brings present advantage, popularity and pleasure to the flesh.

THE PROPER VIEW OF OUR TRIALS

There is a special love required by God of the Gospel Church--this peculiar class now called of Him. They are to have a love that is so unselfish that it will be willing, yea, glad, to lay down the earthly life in the service of God, that they may bring blessings to others. To these God has promised the special crown of life--immortality, His own nature. These are to be the blessers of their brethren, those of the nature formerly their own. As Isaac was the blesser of Ishmael and of the sons of Keturah, and as the first-born of Israel were the blessers of their brethren, so these will bless all the peoples of the earth, from among whom they were chosen. How thankful we should be for an honor so great!

If these favored children of the Heavenly King could always keep in mind the fact that every trial and testing, every persecution and difficulty, permitted to come upon those who have made the Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord, is designed to develop them, to prove and test their love, to demonstrate whether or not their characters are fixed, rooted and grounded in righteousness, it would set all their painful experiences and temptations in a new light, and would be a great assistance to them in fighting the good fight of faith successfully. For if by these trials and tribulations the Lord is proving our love and devotion to Him, then whatever they may be, whether great or small, we should diligently use them as opportunities to demonstrate to our God the fulness of our love for Him and His cause, and as means by which we may rise day by day to greater heights of spiritual attainment, being changed into the likeness of our Master.

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Thus viewed and thus met, every trial and affliction would prove a blessing, a Heavenly messenger, bearing us on wings of faith "Nearer, our God, to Thee, nearer to Thee." Then, beloved, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [trials, testings], knowing this, that the trial of your faith worketh patience [patient endurance]. But let patience perfect her work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Herein we "greatly rejoice--though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations [testings, provings], that the trial of your faith, being much more

precious than of gold, which perisheth, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls!"--James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6-8.

Truly, "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things that are seen [the things of the present order] are temporal, but the things which are not seen [the glories to come] are eternal."--2 Corinthians 4:17,18.

"WILL YE ALSO GO AWAY?"

Thus we are assured in the infallible Word of God that those who love the Lord, and who are to receive the Kingdom, will have their love tested by trials and temptations on the way to that Kingdom. Those who do not

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love the Lord with all their hearts, in whom self or some other idol has first place, will be seduced by the world, the flesh or the Devil into some form of rebellion against the Divine Word or the Divine providences. They will have schemes and theories which they will prefer to the Lord's Plan and the Lord's way; and their schemes when analyzed will usually be found to be based either upon selfishness or ambition or upon an evil spirit of envy, hatred, jealousy, etc.

The Lord's leading and the Lord's words lose their attraction to such, and they lose their interest correspondingly; and like those who turned away from the Master at His First Advent, and said, "This is a hard saying," so these also go away and "walk no more with Him." But some will continue to walk with the Lord; some will not be driven away nor decoyed from Him by the arts and wiles of the Evil One and his hosts. These are such as are at heart fully the Lord's, not their own; they will follow the Lamb of God, whithersoever He may lead, because they have no will except His will. They will follow Him through all the Narrow Way of discipline and trial in this life; and by and by, as He has assured them, "They shall walk with Me in white; for they are worthy." --Revelation 3:4.

OUR UNFAILING SHELTER

Nor will this choice company lack in number by reason of the falling away of some. It will be of the predestinated number which God arranged to constitute the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. The Father's foreknowledge made full allowance for all who would turn back, and He knew that

the requisite number would follow on, to make their calling and election sure. These have learned that the call of the world, the promptings of the flesh, and the arts of the Adversary, are all snares and traps and pitfalls to drag them down to death. They have learned the sound of the true Shepherd's voice, and cannot be enticed by the voice of strangers.

Precious children of the Lord, blessed are ye! Sheltered in the "secret place of the Most High" no evil shall befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. "He shall give His angels charge concerning thee; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." How safe and secure are these! Though a thousand fall at their side, and ten thousand at their right hand, yet the plague shall not come nigh them. They have "made the Most High their Habitation," and He will keep them from all harm.

"Under His Wings I am safely abiding,
Though the night deepens and tempests are wild;
Still I can trust Him, I know He will keep me;
He has redeemed me, and I am His child.

"Under His Wings! What a refuge in sorrow!
How the heart yearningly turns to His rest!
Often when earth has no balm for my healing,
Here I find comfort, and here I am blest.

"Under His Wings! Oh, what precious enfolding!
Here will I hide till life's trials are o'er;
Sheltered, protected, no evil can harm me,
Resting in Jesus, I'm safe evermore!"

As the faithful disciples of the Master in the first Harvest realized a meaning in His teachings which others of the professed children of God could not appreciate, so now, at the Second Advent of the Lord, His words have a precious significance to those who are in heart-harmony with Him which none others can realize. And we see now, as at the First Advent, that some are stumbling and going back, while others are being drawn more closely to the Lord than ever, by means of the knowledge of His Plan which He is supplying.

FEASTING IN THE BANQUET HALL

As we draw nearer to the close of the Harvest, we shall not be surprised if the way become still narrower, still more difficult, and if the temptations to stumble and to fall become still more frequent. Let us then, dear brethren, be more and more on our guard against the wiles of the great Enemy of our souls, and against the deceptions of our own fallen nature. Let the perfect love of God rule in your hearts, driving out self-love and world-love, with their pride, ambition and folly. Let entire devotion to God bring into your hearts the promised

fulness of joy and rest and peace. Be fruitful branches in the Vine, abiding ever in Him, responding to all the prunings of the great Husbandman with more abundant fruitage.

If beguilements come to us, let us say with the Apostles of old: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." There is life nowhere else, and we wish to go nowhere else. We are feasting in the banquet hall of our Father's House, "and His banner over us is love!" We have an abundant supply: our table is richly laden. So we eat and go on our way rejoicing. We are nearing Home. We shall soon reach the last mile-stone in our journey! Then, with a song on our lips, let us press on!

"Tempted and tried, whatever betide,
In His secret pavilion His children shall hide.
'Neath the shadowing wing of eternity's King,
His children may trust, yea, His children may sing.

"Tempted and tried, yet the Lord will abide
Thy faithful Redeemer and Keeper and Guide,
Thy shield and thy sword, thine exceeding reward;
Then enough for the servant to be as his Lord.

"Tempted and tried, the Savior who died
Hath called thee to suffer--then reign by His side.
If His cross thou wilt bear, His crown thou shalt wear,
And forever and ever His glory shalt share."

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"THE LORD THY GOD IS A FAITHFUL GOD"

"O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of His praise to be heard; which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved."--Psalm 66:8,9.

IN THIS Psalm the Prophet David calls upon all the world to praise the Lord. In prophetic language he exclaims: "All the earth shall worship Thee; they shall sing to Thy name!" Then he recounts the wonderful manifestation of the Power of God in His dealings with Israel; he calls upon the people to bless the Lord and sound His praises abroad. Taking a retrospective view of the dealings of Jehovah with His people, he continues: "For Thou, O God, hast proved us, Thou hast tried us as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; Thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place!"--vs.10-12.

The Psalmist then declared that he would enter into the house of the Lord, and would pay unto the Lord the vows which he had made in the time of his trouble. He recounts the goodness of God to himself. He tells that he had cried unto the Lord and extolled His praises, that his prayers had been answered, and that he had been lifted up and blessed and delivered. He calls upon Israel to remember all the leadings of the Lord in their past history and all His goodness to them as a people, and exhorts them to sound forth the praises of His great name. God had brought the people of Israel up out of bondage to Egypt; He had protected them through all their wilderness journeyings and ever since.

King David reminds them that they had been kept alive, that God had not permitted them to be exterminated --He had "suffered not their feet to be moved." They were not vanquished by their enemies, so long as they had trusted and obeyed. Subsequently, because of their disobedience and perversity, God caused them to be carried away into captivity in Babylon. But this was for their good, that He might prove them, and afterwards bring them--all worthy ones--back into their own land.

LET SPIRITUAL ISRAEL SOUND HIS PRAISES!

But although this Psalm has a primary significance as relates to Natural Israel, our thought is, in harmony with the applications made by our Lord and the Apostles, that these words are even more appropriate in their application to Spiritual Israel. The Lord has brought us up out of the world. He has delivered us from the great taskmaster, Satan. He has guided us through the wilderness journey; He has fed us with the Manna from Heaven; He has brought us forth the Water of Life from the great Rock of Ages smitten for us, that we might drink and live. He has washed our feet from the dust of our wilderness way. He has faithfully disciplined and chastened us as His sons; He has gone before us through all the toilsome march, and has been our Rearward as well, to protect us from all danger and harm. If Natural Israel had great cause for thankfulness and praise, what should be our attitude, for all the marvelous manifestations of His love and care for us, His Spiritual Israel! Truly, as no other people on earth,

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past or present, can we praise our God! With the poet we can say:

"He was better to me than all my hopes,
He was better than all my fears;
He made a bridge of my broken works,
And a rainbow of my tears!
The billows that guarded my sea-girt path
Carried my Lord on their crest;

When I dwell on the days of my wilderness march,
I can lean on His love for the rest.

"He emptied my hands of their treasured store,
And His covenant love revealed;
There was not a wound in my aching heart,
But the balm of His breath has healed.
Oh, tender and true was the chastening sore
In wisdom that taught and tried,
Till the soul He loved was trusting in Him,
And in nothing on earth beside!

"He guided my steps where I could not see,
By ways that I had not known;
The crooked was straight and the rough made plain,
As I followed the Lord alone.
I praise Him still for the pleasant palms,
For the water-springs by the way;
For the glowing pillar of flame by night,
And the guiding cloud by day.

"There is never a watch in the dreariest halt
But some promise of love endears;
I read from the past that the future shall be
Far better than all my fears.
Like the golden pot of the wilderness bread,
Laid up with the blossoming rod,
All safe in the Ark with the Law of the Lord,
In the Covenant care of my God!"

SOME FAITHFUL THROUGHOUT THE DARK AGES

Our God never fails His children: His name is Faithfulness!
He has never permitted His Church to be exterminated,
notwithstanding all the assaults of error and
of the powers of darkness. There are still true people of
God in the world, and ever have been. Throughout the
Dark Ages, the great fact of our Redeemer's sacrifice for
sin was still held by some of the true saints of the Lord.
This precious truth was never completely lost during
those years of darkness and obscurity, and in God's due
time His Church emerged from the wilderness, "leaning
upon the arm of her Beloved." The light has since grown
brighter and brighter to the faithful, watching ones. And
what a flood of glory now shines upon the path of the
saints!

"Looking back, we praise the way
God has led us day by day!"

The saints of God during the past centuries did not
need these additional blessings which are supplied to the
faithful of today, but their every need was supplied. We
are living in the days of the "cleansed Sanctuary." More
Truth is now due than at any time in the history of the
Church. Truly, our Lord has "brought us into His banqueting
House, and His banner over us is Love!" (Cant. 2:4.)
Truly, "He holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth

not our feet to be moved," despite all the thousand snares laid for our feet by the great Adversary and his servants--many of them unwittingly serving him. We can see that long ago we might have been overcome by the Adversary's attacks had not our God been a Wall of Protection round about us.

HIS SAINTS SHALL NEVER BE MOVED

"Our lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places!" (Psalm 16:6.) But it is only the faithful who are thus kept. We are not to understand that the Lord keeps any who do not themselves make the proper effort to know the will of God that they may do it; it is those who are following in the footsteps of Jesus, doing all in their power to please the Lord as they are able to discern the way wherein He would have them walk. These are today causing the voice of His praise to be heard, and grace sufficient is their portion. If the trials of faith, submission and trust shall be greater in the near future than they have yet been, these faithful ones will not fall. Their feet shall not be moved, even though a host encamp against them, and thousands fall at their side.

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"Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." These will be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, even though they be required for a time to follow where they cannot see.

Let us therefore go forward with good courage, knowing that He who hath led us thus far will continue to lead. He who favored us first will favor us last; and "He that is on our side is greater than all they that be against us." Thanks be to God that His grace has preserved us, that He has kept us from falling, that so many of us are still of one heart and one mind to go forward unflinchingly, whatever the coming days may bring! If they shall bring hardship and persecution, pain and trial, His grace will uphold us still. If they shall bring us tests of faith and endurance, His promises will not fail. Let our entire trust be centered in God. Let us continue to rejoice in Him. "Let Him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord, which exerciseth loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth; for in these things do I delight, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 9:24.) Testings will be permitted to come upon the people of God for the very purpose of sifting out all who are not truly His. Then let us stand fast, knowing that He is faithful.

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THE DRAMA IN EUROPE

IN furtherance of plans for introducing the PHOTO-DRAMA in Europe, the Editor, accompanied by three trained operators, left New York on the S.S. Lusitania, May 19th, several friends joining the party. Our arrival in London was in good season for the London Convention at Whitsuntide. The three days at the Convention proved very interesting and profitable. All the sessions were held in the London Opera House, the largest attendance being two thousand. The various features of God's great Plan were set forth by seventeen speakers. The Convention adjourned with a Love Feast, in which nearly two thousand participated. This was freely declared to be the most enjoyable Convention ever held in Europe. The Lord was with His people, blessing, refreshing, strengthening us. One hundred and twenty-four witnessed by water immersion their full consecration to the Lord even unto death.

Meantime, preparations for the DRAMA were in progress. A school was started for giving finishing instructions to Brethren who had already gained a considerable knowledge of cinematograph operation--to acquaint them with the special features appertaining to the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION. A Scottish class and two English classes were promptly started, totaling fifteen fine young men consecrated and eager for service. A lesson or two demonstrated that they will speedily be very efficient. Meantime another class of five will be trained as soon as the work shall seem to call for their services. Delegations from France, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland came to London to arrange for the DRAMA in their several home lands and to gain information respecting its operation and the necessary steps of preparation. It is our hope that July will witness the presentation of the DRAMA in all those countries. The friends seem very keen and the prospects favorable.

A favorable start with the DRAMA was made at the Princess Theatre, London, on Sunday, June 14th, on which day about twenty-two hundred were in attendance. The DRAMA is to continue every afternoon and evening for a month. Further showings in London are probable, but what they will be depends considerably upon the Lord's providence and the zeal of the local friends. All seemed greatly pleased with the two parts of the DRAMA exhibited prior to our departure, June 20th. We believe that in Europe, as in the United States, the public will be greatly interested and profited by this, the latest method of writing the Divine measurement, or plan, upon tables --the Gospel being pictured at the same time that it is explained by our very wonderful talking machine arrangements and our free Scenario.

Arrangements for various cities in Great Britain were in progress when we left. In Glasgow the DRAMA was to open on the very next day, June 21st, in St. Andrew's Hall, the largest Auditorium of that city. We have no doubt that the Lord's blessing upon the energy of the Brethren there will make the presentation a success--profitable to many.

Leaving the operators to install the DRAMA in Great Britain, Scandinavia, Germany, France and Switzerland, in co-operation with the Society's Branches in those countries, we began our homeward journey June 20th, on the S.S. Aquitania. A remarkably quiet and pleasant journey brought us to the home land in good season for the Conventions at Asbury Park, N.J.; Columbus, Ohio, and Clinton, Iowa.

The Editor was both encouraged and continually inspired and refreshed by his contact with the Brethren in and from the various parts of the world. It is helpful to note the spirit of loyalty to the Lord and His Word--the spirit of devotion continuing for months and years. The Spirit manifested is the same everywhere--the spirit of love and zeal--the Holy Spirit. The reason for this manifestation is explained by the Apostle's words, "We are all baptized by the one Spirit into one Body"--Christ.

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THREE GRAND CONVENTIONS

THIS year's arrangement of having our Conventions early and in three central locations at the same time seems to have had the Lord's blessing. The Asbury Park, N.J., Convention was a convenient one for the friends residing in the East. Columbus, Ohio, was best of all as respects auditorium; but Clinton, Iowa, excelled in several respects. In each case our Association were the guests of the city by invitation of the local government. In each case the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION was shown to appreciative thousands. In each case the attendance aggregated two thousand, some coming at the beginning of the Convention and remaining a few days, and others coming toward the close, and some remaining the entire time.

We had many evidences of the Lord's favor and blessing. The total number attending was thus six thousand; the total number of baptisms three hundred and fifty-six; the total number of States represented thirty-six, besides four Canadian Provinces and one from Fiji Islands, and British representatives. Best of all, the Lord was with us by His Holy Spirit, which was manifested in the faces, the words, the conduct--not only of the Convention, but also of the audience. It was good to be there. As usual,

the dear friends at the various Conventions declared these the very best ever.

No doubt personal growth in grace and in knowledge

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and the Spirit of the Lord has much to do with this greater appreciation of our opportunities as they are coming to us year by year and day by day. To the impure nothing is pure. To the discontented nothing is happifying. To those who have come into personal relationship with the Lord and who are resting in His promises there is a blessing, a refreshment, a strength, an encouragement, every time the precious things are touched, handled, mentioned. We thank God as we notice the various manifestations of growth in grace amongst His People. "What manner of persons ought we to be," in view of our glorious relationship, our grand hopes, our precious fellowship with the Lord and with His brethren!

Only one thing did the Editor fear in respect to the influences mentioned and the able addresses of the speakers. He fears that the dear friends in several instances were over-stimulated by too positive assurance that the present year will witness the "change" of the Church, establishment of the Kingdom, etc. With all due respect for the opinions of the brethren, we believe that the present is a time for great soberness of mind, avoidance of speculation and waiting for whatever the Lord may be pleased to bring to pass. We greatly fear that some of the dear friends will experience sharp disappointments, if some of the confident statements made on the Convention platform miscarry. At no time has the Editor ever spoken or written as positively as some of these dear brethren are speaking now. In the books, "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES," as well as in THE WATCH TOWER, we have set forth the chronology, not as infallible, but nevertheless declared our confidence in it. However, we have always encouraged the friends to examine for themselves, to use their own judgment. To assist them in this we have given in detail the references, etc. In recent numbers of THE WATCH TOWER we have plainly stated that fulfilments of the prophecies, although marked and manifest, are not as far developed for the time as we had expected.

The Editor at all three of these Conventions took occasion to reiterate the views already presented in THE WATCH TOWER:

(1) That the chronology and prophecies interwoven with it still seem as strong as ever--still seem to teach that Gentile Times will end next October.

(2) He pointed out, however, that the ending of the Gentile Times might not usher in the great Time of Trouble so quickly as has been expected. He pointed out that the lease expiring might not mean an instantaneous dispossession, but, possibly, might mean a gradual dispossession, or perhaps a sharp notice to quit, followed by eviction a little later on.

(3) He reminded the Conventioneers of his utterance in a recent number of THE WATCH TOWER, to the effect that it is possible that the Gentile Times might close without world-wide trouble immediately, and that the Church might be completed with some of the members this side the veil participating for a little season in the "judgments written."

(4) He especially sought to impress upon all that our consecration was unto death, and that if the Lord permits us to continue here awhile longer than we expected, our love and loyalty should be manifest in our joyful submission to His arrangements; and furthermore, that if the privileges and blessings of the present year be continued, our cup of joy will run over every way.

A beautiful spirit seemed to pervade the Conventions, reminding us of the Scripture which declares, "By one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body." That one Spirit is the Holy Spirit of God--the spirit of love and loyalty to Him, to His Word, to our brethren--the spirit of sympathy, love, helpfulness, which would do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto the Household of Faith. Invitations for a September Convention were received from Los Angeles, San Francisco, Mountain Lake Park, Md., and Saratoga Springs, N.Y., but nothing has yet been determined in respect to any of them.

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CHRISTIAN LIBERTY BASED ON PRINCIPLE

WE MUST never forget that our authorization to meet as brethren is the Master's Word: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:20.) As this is our charter-right for meeting as the Lord's people, we must concede an equal right under it to all of God's people who may choose to meet in His name at any place and at any time. We should remember the Bible illustration of this principle: On one occasion the twelve disciples had returned from a preaching tour, and St. John said to Jesus, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not; for he that is not against us is for us." (Luke 9:49,50.) This one forbidden by John would correspond well with some now holding meetings other than those which we attend. What did Jesus say? "Forbid him not; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name that can lightly speak evil of Me."--Mark 9:38-40.

Here is a general principle which will serve to guide, to instruct God's people of today respecting His will in

similar matters. We, of course, think our arrangements most pleasing to the Lord, or we would not have them so. If others think differently, the responsibility is with them and with the Lord. It is not for us to forbid them, but it is for the Lord to bless them or not to bless them, according to His wisdom in the management of His work.

Some one may suggest, Would not this thought, acted upon, break up the meetings of the Lord's people into very small classes? We reply that this must depend upon the brethren themselves. They have the right to meet in twos and threes or in larger numbers. If they can find it to their advantage to meet in larger groups, no doubt they will be glad to do so. This means a great deal of liberty in the Church within the lines of the word and spirit of Jesus' teaching, directly and through His Apostles.

Brethren meeting as a class should understand that in so doing they properly waive, or make void, some of their personal liberties and privileges. Individual preferences are to be more or less subjected to class preferences. Even the majority of the class should be considerate of the wishes of the minority, and if possible, should moderate the arrangements, so that all can be accommodated and pleased in respect to speakers, and in respect to place and character of meetings. No one should selfishly consider merely his own preferences and welfare. The spirit of co-operation, the Golden Rule, the spirit of love, should prevail. And as this is true, all those filled with the Spirit of the Master and living close to Him will find fellowship one with another in yielding personal preferences in the interest of the whole number.

CONSCIENCE TO BE RESPECTED

The only things that may not be yielded to the will of the majority are matters of conscience. No one is to do

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what he believes to be sin, injustice, wrong, even though all the remainder of the brethren think it right. And no one is to leave undone what his conscience dictates, even though so directed by all the remainder of the brethren of the class.

Conscience is always to be respected--never to be throttled or violated. Nor is any one who stands faithful to his conscience to be disesteemed therefor by his brethren, even if their consciences view the matter differently. On the contrary, his courage in standing by his convictions is to be considered estimable.

On these principles liberty may be maintained in the Body of Christ; and we shall find blessing in proportion as those of one mind can fellowship with each other. Where fellowship is not maintained, the assembling is neither desirable nor in harmony with the Divine arrangement. But where the brethren find it advantageous to meet in different classes, it will usually be

found, we believe, that originally too great restraint of personal liberty was exercised, and that the majority were too careless of the sentiments of the brethren constituting the minority.

But even where it may be found necessary or desirable to have more than one gathering of the Lord's people in one city, it certainly still is true that they should have one heart and one mind, and be of one brotherhood under the Anointed Head. They should consider each other's interests, and do all in their power "to provoke one another to love and to good works."-- Hebrews 10:24.

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BARREN FIG TREE--DEFILED TEMPLE

--AUGUST 9.--MARK 11:12-25.--

"By their fruits ye shall know them."--MATTHEW 7:20.

THE triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem was a past incident. After spending a portion of the day in the Holy City, Jesus returned to Bethany, which is merely a suburb. The next morning, going again to the city, Jesus noted a fig tree by the wayside, bearing plenty of leaves. He approached it, seeking figs, but found none. The good show of leaves was deceptive. Then Jesus put a ban, a curse, a blight, upon the tree, declaring that it should not bear fruit forever, or to a completion. What did this mean? Surely it was not an intimation that the followers of Jesus should place a curse upon every unfruitful tree or unfruitful field! There must have been some deeper lesson in it, not apparent on the surface.

Bible students believe that they now see the deeper significance of this carefully noted incident. They believe that that fig tree was used as a type, or picture, of the Jewish nation; and that that blight upon the tree because of its unfruitfulness corresponded exactly to the blight pronounced the day before upon the Jewish nation because of its unfruitfulness.

On the day previous Jesus had said to the Jewish nation, "Ye shall see Me no more until that Day." So He declared of this tree that it should be blighted to the end of the aion, or Age. Again, when speaking to His disciples respecting the end of this Age, Jesus declared, "When ye shall see the fig tree putting forth leaves, then know that summer is nigh"--that the winter time, the blight time of the nation of Israel and of the world, is at an end. In other words, one of the signs of a New Dispensation would be the sprouting, or indications of

life, hope, promise, amongst the Jews.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ZIONISM

These same Bible students are now pointing to the revival of hope amongst the Jewish people, as especially manifested by Zionism. It is being pointed out that this return of hope and faith to the Jews respecting their land and the Divine promises of the past is opportune--exactly in line with prophecy. They point to Isaiah 40th chapter as now in process of fulfilment: "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

These Bible students are telling that Ezekiel's prophecy of the valley of dry bones which came together, were clothed with flesh and finally received the breath of life, is an allegory respecting the Jews. They hold that it does not refer to a literal resurrection, but to the revival of Israel's hopes in the Divine promises. This is in harmony with the Prophet's declaration, "These bones are the whole House of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off from our parts."--Ezekiel 37:11.

The same Bible students declare that St. Paul teaches that the Jewish nation was typically represented by Ishmael, the son of Hagar. (Galatians 4:22-31.) As Hagar and her son were outcast for a time only, so the Law Covenant and the Jews have been cut off from Divine favor only for a time. Ishmael had almost fainted for thirst in the wilderness, and then was revived by the angel of the Lord, who pointed out a spring of water. This also is typical. Jewish hopes of God's favor had almost died. Zionism is the well-spring which is reviving them--rescuing them from death as a people. Under Messiah's Kingdom, soon to be established on the spirit plane, the Jews will receive a great blessing--on the earthly plane.

We know of no other interpretation which seems to fit the facts of this lesson or to show a reason why Jesus should manifest displeasure against an inanimate object, which had no personal responsibility or accountability.

CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

After the fig tree incident, Jesus and His disciples proceeded to Jerusalem and went directly to the Temple. There, contrary to anything that He had previously done, Jesus assumed authority, and began to cast out the traders without ceremony, overturning the tables of the money-changers and the stalls where doves were sold to people who desired to offer them in sacrifice at the Temple. Another account of the same incident tells us that in this cleansing of the Temple Jesus used a scourge of small cords, and drove forth the traders. Today's

lesson tells us that He would not permit even the carrying of vessels through the Temple. All this is of double significance:

(1) Primarily, it had to do with that time;

(2) Secondly, it was typical of a cleansing of the antitypical Temple due, we believe, in this our day.

According to the legal usages of our day, it would be quite improper for any one to enter any church edifice or temple in order to interfere with any of the rights of conscience or the procedure sanctioned by the congregation owning the edifice. If wrong were being done and he wished to rectify it, it would be his duty either to go and swear out a warrant before a magistrate or to call a policeman and have him take note of the infraction of the law and correct matters. But under the Jewish Law

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it was different. Every Jew was privileged to enforce the Divine Law in respect to blasphemy or any sacrilege. Parents were even required by the Law to stone their own children to death for blasphemy.

Jesus therefore did only what any Jew would have a right to do, in upsetting the trading apparatus of those who were defiling the Temple of the Lord, doing violence to its sanctity. It will be noticed that as much as their Scribes and Pharisees desired to find some occasion against Jesus, they made no objection to the high-handed procedure here described. Jesus was within His rights, He was championing the cause, the honor, of God and His Temple, as He had a perfect right to do.

"MADE IT A DEN OF THIEVES"

In the declaration, "Ye have made it a den of thieves," Jesus intimated that responsibility for the prevailing condition of things rested upon those in authority--the Scribes and the Pharisees. For graft and other considerations they had permitted the especially consecrated House of God to become a place of merchandise. Moreover, it is claimed by some that the Temple was frequently used as a place for barter on a larger scale. Here money-sharks found opportunity for meeting people in distress, who came to the Temple for prayer. Such were referred to by Jesus as those who robbed widows, while for pretense they made long prayers. In other words, Jesus judged that some in His day made a cloak, or pretense, of their religion in order to take advantage and to reap pecuniary benefit. Hence the Temple had become "a den of thieves."

In olden times, as with many at present, there was a literalness attached to the word theft which only partly covered its meaning. The loan-sharks infested the Temple, pretended sympathy for those in trouble, and loaned money on exacting terms which finally devoured the property of the widow and the orphan in a legal

manner. We fear that the same is true today--that religion is still used as a cloak to cover selfishness. People who do not think of literally committing theft, robbery, often succumb to the arguments of warped consciences. The Master, who was especially indignant at such misuse of the House of God of old, holds the same sentiments today. It is in vain that any claim to be His followers, His disciples, His friends, members of the true Church of Christ, who at the same time use religion hypocritically.

"THE HOUSE OF PRAYER"

While Jesus often went into the mountain to pray, or prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, while Pharisees sometimes prayed on the street corners, and while St. Peter went to the housetop to pray, nevertheless the Temple was recognized by all the Jews as especially a House of prayer. Thus we read that St. Peter and St. John went up to the Temple to pray. (Acts 3:1.) It was the one place of all others in the world where the soul might feel that it could draw especially near to God. In the

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Most Holy was the Mercy Seat, upon which rested the Shekinah light, representing Divine Presence.

The nearer to that Most Holy any one was able to draw, the more was he understood to be in communion with God. Thus the priests alone might enter the Holy and the Most Holy. The others of the nation of Israel were not permitted to come nearer than the Court. Of these courts there were three--first, the one for the Jews; second, the one for Jewish women; and third, an outer Court, where believing Gentiles might worship the true God, but separated by "a middle wall of partition," as St. Paul declares. (Ephesians 2:14.) These Courts represented differing degrees of approach to God's favor. In the antitype, which is not yet complete, Christ and His Church will be the Temple proper; and all mankind desiring to approach God will approach through The Christ, the Temple of God. And the nearer they come, the greater will be their blessing.

St. Peter and St. Paul both tell us of this antitypical Temple: "Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit?" (1 Corinthians 6:19.) "The Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are." (1 Corinthians 3:17.) The Church, making increase for years in the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, "groweth unto a holy Temple of the Lord." (Ephesians 2:21.) "Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual House." (1 Peter 2:5.) "Ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Holy Spirit"--"built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner Stone."--Ephesians 2:20-22.

This antitypical Temple may be viewed from four different standpoints. In harmony with the last text

quoted, it is still under construction. The living stones are being quarried out of the world, and being shaped and polished for places in the glorious Temple of which Christ is the Head. That Temple will be spiritual, unseen of men, each member like unto the glorified Jesus, far above angels.

In that Temple God by His Holy Spirit will dwell in fullest measure. Through it all mankind, during the Millennium, will be privileged to draw near to God and to receive Divine favors and uplift out of sin and death, back to the original image and likeness of God lost in Eden, redeemed for all at Calvary, and to be offered to all during Messiah's Kingdom Reign of a thousand years. Then in the largest sense of the word it will be God's Holy Place. Nothing defiling shall be brought into it. All merchandising and money-sharking will be far from it. It will be the House of Prayer, the Channel of Prayer, the way of approach of mankind to draw near to God for forgiveness of sins and for the reception of all the blessings and mercies which God has provided in Christ for whosoever will.

It was because the Temple at Jerusalem was a type of that glorious Temple of perfection that all business of every kind done in it was profanation--was spoiling the beautiful perfection of the type--was misrepresenting the future, the reality--God's intention in giving it.

"YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE"

But now let us take a still different view of the subject--not contradictory to the foregoing, but confirmatory. As in the future the Church will be the Temple of God, perfect on the Heavenly plane, so each individual member of the Church of Christ, who has been begotten of the Holy Spirit as a New Creature, has to that extent God dwelling in his mortal body. The world in general are not temples of the Holy Spirit, however good or moral or kind or generous.

No one becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit until begotten of the Holy Spirit. That spirit-begetting constitutes him a New Creature, a son of God, even though only the will, the mind, is begotten again--even though the body is still an imperfect body of flesh. The new mind, dwelling in the old body and using it, constitutes that old body thenceforth a temple of God, and gives to that body a holiness or sanctity which it did not have before.

Now, as the New Creature dwells in this mortal body, it is styled a tabernacle rather than a temple, because through sin and degradation it is impaired, and not glorious. Besides, the word tabernacle signifies that which is temporary, not permanent, not eternal. Our Heavenly house, our spiritual body, will be the Temple, but none can enter that perfect Temple condition except

by a share in the First Resurrection, as Jesus said:
"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection;
on such the Second Death hath no power, but
they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign
with Him a thousand years."--Revelation 20:6.

None can know the character of the heart, whether it
be a new heart or merely that of the natural man or
woman who has learned politeness, morality, etc. The
only way in which we are permitted to judge each other
is by the outward fruitage. If the Spirit of the Lord
dwell within, the fruitage must be good, helpful to others.
That human being must be a blessing in his home, in his
community, even as Jesus was, whether his character, his
goodness, be acknowledged by others in general or not.
The fruits of these people of God are the fruits of holiness,
meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, brotherly-kindness,
self-sacrifice in the interest of others and especially
in the service of God and His Truth.

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WICKED VINE-DRESSERS

--AUGUST 16.--MATTHEW 21:33-46.--

"The Stone that the builders rejected, the same
is become the Head of the corner."--Matthew 21:42.

NOT only did the Redeemer teach chiefly by
parables, but additionally nearly all of those
parables related directly or indirectly to the
Kingdom. The reason for this is plain.
The Divine Plan calls for the setting up of
the Kingdom of Righteousness by Divine
Power for the overcoming of the Prince of
Darkness and his reign, which for six
thousand years has been a Reign of Sin
and Death. While not directly telling of
the Kingdom, the lesson of today points to it indirectly.

While the whole world was lying in darkness and sin
and under Divine sentence of unworthiness of life, God
planted in the world a root of promise, a hope. This
Promise, made to Abraham, foretold that his see, or
posterity, would eventually become very great and powerful,
and would cause the blessing of God to fill the
earth, instead of the curse, which it would roll away.
In due time this Promise came to the nation of Israel,
as the natural posterity of Abraham and the heirs of the
Promise. Thus God planted a vineyard in the world,
the Jewish nation, a special and peculiar people bound to
Him, and He to them, by the Law Covenant negotiated
through Moses. God set a hedge about this nation and
gave them special provisions of Divine favor "every
way." (Romans 3:1,2.) The Divine hedge was the

Divine promise that as long as the Israelites would be faithful and loyal to God, they would be thoroughly protected against their enemies.

The vineyard had a watch tower, as was common in those days, that from this tower watchmen might guard against robbers. So the Lord declared Himself to be Israel's High Tower. He placed watchmen, even the Prophets, who cried aloud and warned the people from time to time in respect to any and every breaking down of the wall, or partition; for this protection could be broken down only by disloyalty, carelessness, sin, on the part of Israel. The statement that the Lord, after having made this arrangement with Abraham's seed, went into a far country implies that the arrangement was intended to stand for a long time.

THE ORIGINAL VINE-DRESSERS

While in this parable the entire nation of Israel is represented by the vineyard, the husbandmen, or caretakers of the vineyard, were the religious leaders, of whom Jesus said, "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do." (Matthew 23:2,3.) These vine-dressers became conceited, got to feel a proprietary right in the vineyard, acted as though they were the real owners, and not merely the Owner's servants. Even in their speech they became accustomed to refer to the masses of Israel as the laity and to themselves as the clergy. They referred to the people as "our people," "my people," etc. In other words, they failed to glorify God properly, and therefore in thus taking honor to themselves felt themselves more than the servants of God, honored in being permitted to be vine-dressers in His vineyard.

As centuries rolled on, it was only proper to expect that the operation of the Law Covenant would produce good fruitage amongst the people--that through their inability to keep the Law they would become stronger in character; that these united experiences would make them more reverential, more loyal to God, more earnestly desirous that the typical kingdom should give place to the antitypical one, when the Owner would be present, either directly or through some especially appointed representative. In due course of time, the Owner, Jehovah, sent His servants, the Prophets, to Israel, sometimes with one message, sometimes with another. These servants and their messages became tests as respected the love, devotion and loyalty of the vine-dressers, and tests also relative to the character-development of the people of Israel.

But alas! the very ones who should have been glad to welcome the Owner's representatives, and glad to have

manifested to them the fruits of holiness amongst the people, showed their own disloyalty by mistreating the servants. They reasoned that to acknowledge those servants and the reproofs which they gave would mean an acknowledgment that they themselves were merely vine-dressers, and not in any sense of the word owners of the vineyard or an especially preferred class not held responsible under the general Law governing all. Therein their pride and their desire to show off before the people prompted the mistreatment of the Owner's special representatives, the Prophets. As the parable shows, some of these were beaten, others killed, others stoned.

"IT BROUGHT FORTH WILD GRAPES"

Finally the Owner of the vineyard sent His Son, saying, Surely they should reverence My Son. As a matter of fact, the Bible informs us that God knew that the rulers of Israel would not reverence His Son, but would crucify Him; and that He sent His Son with this foreknowledge of their intention.

But the parable is stating the matter from a different standpoint--as though the Owner had said, as He might well have said, "They will reverence My Son." Surely the rulers of the Jews should have revered the Perfect One--"holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." Surely they should have recognized this One, of whom the people declared, "Never man spake like this Man." Surely they should have hearkened to His Message, should have repented of their sins, should have come back through Him into harmony with the Father,

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and thus have obtained forgiveness and a blessing. Whatever reasons there might have seemed to be for their thinking that Isaiah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Malachi and others of the Prophets were deceivers, none of those arguments would hold against the Owner's Son, whose credentials were manifest in His holiness, in His miracles and mighty works, and in His mightier words of life.

However, the spirit of selfishness and self-conceit is powerful, and often leads those who possess it to monstrous acts which afterward appal even themselves. The Jewish Doctors, the clergy of that time, perceived that Jesus, the Son of God, the Representative of the Owner of the vineyard, by His words and deeds was exerting a mighty influence over the people. His claim to be the Owner's Son was backed by numerous signs which the people were disposed to recognize. We read that He departed into a mountain alone, when the people would take Him by force to make him a King. The clerical class reasoned that to whatever extent His cause should prevail, their power over the people, their influence, their titles, their honors of men, would diminish in importance.

"BEHOLD OPPRESSION--BEHOLD A CRY"

The rulers of the vineyard, shown by Jesus' description to be the Pharisees and the Sadducees, had become very unbelieving as respects the declaration of the Prophets that the King would eventually send Messiah with great blessings and power for the glorification of that vineyard and the widening of its influence in the whole world. The Sadducees, including many of the Scribes, as a class were agnostics--disbelievers in the inspiration of the promises and the prophecies. The same spirit affected the Pharisees to a considerable extent. All were self-seeking. Jesus styled them "money-lovers," and declared that they sought chiefly the honor of men rather than that honor which cometh alone from God.

In their exasperation against Jesus, in their realization that His victory meant their defeat and the defeat of all the institutions which represented their wisdom and teachings, they determined that it was necessary for Him to die. By this they meant that His death was necessary for the success of their theories and plans, because His theories, His teachings, were so different from theirs. They could not endure the thought that the great institutions which they had so laboriously constructed out of human traditions which made void the Word of God should all fade away. To them it seemed that to surrender their plans to Jesus and for Him to carry out the plans which He preached would mean the ruin of the vineyard, the nation. They did not realize that the course which they were taking was the very one which would lead to the destruction of that typical kingdom of God, that typical vineyard.

Jesus carried the parable up to His own time and foretold His own violent death at the hands of those wicked vine-dressers who treated the Lord's heritage as though it were their own. Then, in conclusion, Jesus asked His hearers what they would expect the Owner of that vineyard to do with those wicked husbandmen when He should come to take possession and to redress the wrongs. The answer was that He would miserably destroy those wicked vine-dressers, and would let out His vineyard to other husbandmen who would render Him the proper fruits at the proper time.

Jesus did not Himself give the answer, but His silence was confirmatory of the answer of the people. And so the parable was fulfilled. God's judgments came upon the Jewish nation, with the result that it was entirely overthrown in the year 70 A.D. Speaking of this, St. Paul says, "Wrath is come upon this people to the uttermost" (1 Thessalonians 2:16), that all things written in the Law and the Prophets concerning them should be fulfilled. Their nationality was utterly overthrown and has never since been restored--nor will it be until the time foretold by the Prophets, when Messiah in glory shall establish His Reign of Righteousness and when under His Kingdom those faithful servants, the Prophets, who were

slain, stoned to death, etc., will be made associates and given authority and power as Messiah's representatives in the earth.--Psalm 45:16.

THE NEW VINE-DRESSERS

The Lord said that those originally appointed were wicked vine-dressers. He appointed new ones; namely, the twelve Apostles, St. Paul taking the place of Judas. Moreover, He started a new vineyard, putting into it only the true Vine, inspired with faith and loyalty toward God. Those faithful servants, although they long ago fell asleep, continue through their words, their teachings, to influence, to guard, to keep, the true Vine of the Lord --the Church, the Body of Christ. Of this vineyard our Lord declares, "I am the true Vine; ye are the branches." Century after century these true branches of the true Vine have been planted by baptism into death with their Master and have been bringing forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Ere long, we believe, this fruitage will all be gathered and, by the resurrection "change," be transplanted to the Heavenly condition.

Meantime, however, the same spirit which was manifested by the vine-dressers of the Jewish Age has manifested itself again. Other vineyards have been started. In numbers, wealth and influence these quite outrank and outshine the Lord's vineyard, which alone bears the precious fruit which He desires. The two vines are spoken of in the Bible. The one is said to be "the Vine of My Father's right hand planting." The other is styled "the vine of the earth." The fruitage of the one is manifested in the character-likeness of Christ, faithfulness unto death. The fruitage of the other is manifested in boastfulness, pride, show--a form of godliness without the power thereof.

There is to be a gathering of the fruitage of the vine of the earth at the Second Coming of the Master. We read that it is to be dealt with in the winepress of the wrath of God in the great Time of Trouble with which this Age will pass away, giving place to the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom for the world's uplift.

THE CHIEF CORNER-STONE

The Scriptures give us the thought that the Church of Christ is represented by a pyramid, which has five corner-stones, the chief one being the top-stone--a perfect pyramid in itself, the lines of which control the entire structure. Jesus, rejected by the Jews, crucified, is the Chief Corner-Stone of this great Temple of God which is the Church. Already He is glorified. During this Age His footstep followers, shaped in harmony with His character-likeness, are being prepared to be united with Him in Heavenly glory.

Thus, as our Lord declared, the Kingdom of God was taken from Israel--the natural seed of Abraham--to be

given to Spiritual Israel. God is thus developing or creating the new nation, a holy nation, a peculiar people, separate and distinct from all others, gathered out from Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, from every nation and denomination.

Christ Jesus, the Top-stone, is indeed "a stone of stumbling" to many. By stumbling over Him they injure themselves; but if He should fall on them, in the sense of condemning them, it would signify their utter

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destruction; their cutting off in the Second Death.

The chief priests and the Pharisees heard the Master's parables, and perceived that He spoke of them as the wicked vine-dressers. They sought to lay hold of Him and destroy Him forthwith; but they feared the multitude, who, although they did not recognize Him as the Son of God, did esteem Him the great Prophet, or Teacher.

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SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

COLPORTEURING HELPED BY DRAMA

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Master, the Chief Reaper. We are glad that the privilege is still ours of sharing in the Colporteur service, and we have thought to write you a few lines concerning the work here in C_____, as it is our first experience in canvassing where the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION has been shown.

We are pleased to note what a wonderful impression for good the pictures have left in this city, and we feel assured that this witness to the world is also being used to gather in many who give evidence of being jewels of the Lord's own choosing. We know of quite a number of earnest Bible students who are now associated with the Class here as a result of the Photo-Drama work.

All classes of Christians are being aroused through the pictures. We have sold the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES to some Catholic people when they learned that the books are from the Bible Society which shows the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION.

It seems truly wonderful when we consider what is being accomplished now, in these closing days of the Harvest! The Truth is permeating every nook and corner, accomplishing the great work for which it is sent, being a "savor of life unto life" to one class and "a savor of death unto death" to another.

We are reminded of the words of the Revelator, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just

and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints!" As we go from door to door, meeting with various experiences, we can say with the Apostle Paul, "Thanks be unto God, who causeth us always to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of His knowledge by us in every place."

Pray for us that by the Lord's grace we may be living epistles, as we seek to work out our salvation from day to day, and to spread the light to the best of our ability. That the Lord may continue to bless you, dear Brother, and cause His face to shine upon you, even unto the end of the earthly journey, and then crown you with life more abundant, is our earnest prayer. Warmest Christian love to you and the Bethel family, in which my companions join.

Your sister in the Lord, EMMA L. BRICKER.

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A BAPTIST AND PRESENT TRUTH

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Thinking that my experience in coming into the Truth might be of interest to you, I am sending to you the following:

In 1886 my father saw your advertisement in the Christian Herald, that Volume I, MILLENNIAL DAWN, was in preparation. As soon as he saw the announcement that it was ready, he sent his \$1 and got its teachings, accepting it as rapidly as he saw that it harmonized the Scriptures.

At that time I had joined the Baptist church. After making sure that the book contained nothing but the Truth, my father endeavored to give the same Truth to me. He spoke to me about the unscripturalness of the doctrine of Eternal Torment, the immediate going to Heaven or Hell at death and the doctrine of the natural immortality of man. I was fearful of doctrines which were so different from my Baptist belief; but as he quoted Scriptures, I did not feel that I should oppose them. It seemed to me that there were other Scriptures which taught the opposite; and I felt sure that he must be mistaken, though I did not say so. I quietly determined to read the Bible through, noting all the passages I could which bore on these subjects, so that I would be sure of what the teaching of the whole Scripture is. I felt sure that if I prayed to the Lord for guidance that I might know the Truth, He would not let me go astray. I realized that there was no use in quoting a text here and there. When I spoke to my father, I would give him quotations from every portion of the Bible, and thus show him that the general teachings of the Bible were opposed to his newly found ideas.

Reading during my spare time, it took me six months to read the Bible, marking down the texts I noticed. At the end I had some 725 Scriptures cited:

(a) The first column contained texts which seemed very clearly to teach the old doctrine of Eternal Torment, the immediate reward after death, and the immortality of the soul.

This collection contained about twenty-five texts.

(b) The second column contained texts which clearly supported my father's side. In this column I had about one hundred and twenty-five texts. This somewhat disturbed me.

(c) The third column contained texts which did not exactly favor my belief, but which, while they seemed to favor my father's side, I did not feel like conceding to him until I had further examined them.

I then went over these texts and found that those in column two all remained in that column; and the texts in column three also went into column two. With this new fund of Bible knowledge, I went over column one, and found that over one half of my texts had to go into column two also, leaving me only about twelve or fifteen Scriptures, nearly all of which were in figurative language. I then saw clearly that the doctrines I had been taught from the creeds are wrong; and I at once accepted the Truth. In the last twenty-six years, through the Lord's grace, I have never had occasion to doubt the truth on these matters.

While I was reading the Scriptures, my father frequently tried to persuade me to read THE WATCH TOWER publications; but I felt that I was seeking in the right place for Truth, and that if I were to read something of which I was already fearful, I might be taking my case out of the Lord's hands, and thus go into darkness. He grieved considerably that I would not talk with him or read anything he offered to me. I did not tell him that I was studying the matter all the time. He was greatly surprised when six months later, I showed him the results of my study.

I now see how much labor and time I might have saved had I gone prayerfully at once to THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES. That book today seems more wonderful and satisfying and Scriptural than when I first read it. It has proven itself more impregnable to assaults from all parties than Gibraltar. I praise the Lord for the whole series of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and have never heard any Bible expositions worthy of comparison with them. With much Christian love,
Your Brother in Christ, A. I. RITCHIE.

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THE WONDERFUL SONG

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:--

For a long time I have had it in my heart to write and thank you for the part your work has played in bringing me to the Throne of Heavenly Grace. It is because we love those whom the blessed Lord uses as His chosen ones to carry the Message of Love to us, that I desire that you share the song in my heart all along the way. What a wonderful song it is! It carries us beyond the trivial cares of this evil world and seats us in Heavenly places with our Lord Jesus.

Dear Pastor, it is impossible for me to tell you just how thankful I am for the Light which the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES have shed on the blessed pages of the inspired Word of God; but if through these lines you can catch some of the joy I feel, it will cause you to say, "Praise the Lord!"

I wish to say also that I have taken the Vow. I realize that we who are striving to enter in with Jesus now, to be members of His Body, the Lamb's Bride, cannot show to Him or to others that we are in too deep earnest about the matter.

I must also take this opportunity to say a word about our class here. How we see the spirit of love developing in the members! We see the great transforming work of the Holy Spirit going on, and especially of late--the Love of God showing in the faces. This cannot be hid any more than a rose can hide its own beauty when it opens to the sun. "We love Him because He first loved us." We meet Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday evenings and Sunday afternoons. The Truth grows dearer every day.

We ask an interest in your prayers, that we may stand true to our Lord unto death. We remember you in our prayers. May God bless you!

Yours in the Redeemer, WM. BOUTILIER.--MONTREAL.