
CONTENTS

The Present Crisis.....259
 Fruit of the Vine of the Earth.....259
 Proper Attitude for God's People.....260
 Final Outlook.....260
 Man Proposes--God Disposes.....261
 Emperor William's Ambition.....261
 The Tried and Proven People.....262
 Is God's Knowledge Limited?.....263
 What Is Evil Speaking?.....264
 A Concluding Word of Exhortation.....266
 Judgment of the Nations.....266
 Law of Retribution Operative.....267
 "Let No One Take Thy Crown".....268
 The Number of the Elect.....269
 No Cross, No Crown (Poem).....269
 God's Much Diversified Wisdom.....270
 First Fruit and After Fruit.....270
 Interesting Letters.....271
 Light in Darkest Africa.....271
 The Strengthening Cord.....271

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AT SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y.

The Convention proper will last four days--viz., Sept. 27 to 30, with the Creation Drama every evening. Then Oct. 1 to 4 the Convention feature will yield to the Drama entirely. Saratoga Springs is noted for the salubriousness of its climate and is a delightful rest-haven for a few days. Opportunity for symbolic immersion will be given Monday, Sept. 28.

Using Hudson River boats to Albany and Troy, thence electric trains to Saratoga Springs, the following combined Round Trip rates have been secured from New York City:

People's Line via Albany (night trip), 10 persons or more, each \$4.20.

Citizen's Line via Troy (night trip), 10 persons or more, each \$3.20.

Staterooms for two on night boats \$1 and up, extra. These boats leave New York City, Pier 32 N.R. (foot Canal St.), 6 p.m. daily, and West 132d St., 6:30 p.m.

I.B.S.A. EXCURSION, via HUDSON RIVER DAY LINE. [Going Sat., Sept. 26th--Returning Thurs., Oct. 1.]

- 1 person, regular fare..... \$4.70
25 persons or more, each..... 4.35
50 " " " "..... 4.20
100 " " " "..... 4.00
200 " " " "..... 3.85

The I.B.S.A. excursion starts Saturday, Sept. 26th, from New York (foot Desbrosses St.) 8.40 a.m., stopping West 42d St., 9 a.m., and West 129th St., 9.20 a.m.; returning Thursday, Oct. 1st, arriving New York City at 6 p.m.

Those desiring to get the benefit of this Day Line excursion should so advise the I.B.S.A. Convention Committee, 124 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y., at once. As quickly as we can approximate the number going we will notify you what amount to send for your ticket. Similarly, those preferring to take one of the Night Lines should advise us promptly what date they will go, and what price stateroom desired.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA, SEPTEMBER 24-27

Railroads in the Southeast have granted a special rate of one fare and one-half for the Round Trip on the Certificate Plan. Tickets will be on sale September 21 to 26, inclusive. Be sure to ask for a Certificate Receipt when paying the full one-fare rate on the going trip. This Certificate Receipt will enable you to secure your return ticket at one-half rate plus 50 cents. For further information address Comfort Committee, care Mr. W. S. Stevens, 328-1/2 East Georgia Ave., Atlanta, Ga.

THE PRESENT CRISIS

"Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet."--Matthew 24:6.

THE Scriptures speak of a great Time of Trouble in the conclusion of this Gospel Age. Our Lord in the prophecy recorded in Matthew 24 mentions this great Time of Trouble. Under a figure of the distress of earth and the shaking of the Heavens, etc., He tells of the momentous events of our day. In connection with it He says,

"When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads and rejoice; for your redemption draweth nigh"--linking this great climax to the deliverance of the Church, their change from earthly nature to Heavenly nature.

It is in this connection that our Lord says, "Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." These continued all through the Age. We are not to think of wars as being the particular thing that the Master had in mind when He referred to the great trouble with which this Age will close. That trouble is pictured in Daniel's prophecy as "a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation."--Daniel 12:1.

Our Lord speaks of this same Time of Trouble and says that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke 21:24.) These "Times of the Gentiles" represent a period during which the world was to be ruled by Gentile nations. The Gentiles were to show their skill in giving the world a government. This giving of the world into the hand of Gentile governments followed the taking away of the typical kingdom from typical Israel. With Zedekiah's fall and the taking away of the crown from him, the Lord declared an overturning of His government until the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom.--Ezekiel 21:25.

Simultaneously, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, which portrayed the Gentile rule of earth during the interregnum of God's Kingdom. Daniel showed the king the dream, which the monarch had forgotten, and gave him the interpretation. The king had dreamed of a great image, the head of which represented the Babylonian kingdom; the breast of silver, the Medo-Persian kingdom; the belly and thighs of brass, the Grecian kingdom; the legs of iron, the Roman Empire. The "Holy" Roman Empire was represented in the feet, part of clay and part of iron. A stone was to smite the image upon the feet, which were iron and clay, and break them to pieces. This crushing of the feet of the image was to come in the end of the Age, and would be the preparatory step to the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom.--Daniel 2:31-45.

So long as these governments would be here, they and Messiah's Kingdom could not cooperate. The Gentile governments are based on selfishness and coercion; Christ's Kingdom will be based on justice, love, mercy, under the Prince of Peace. The two could not rule at the same time. Hence it was foretold that Messiah at His Second Coming will first bind the "strong man" of Gentile supremacy, and on the ruins of earthly dominions establish a righteous Government.

The present terrible war is not the great Time of Trouble in the fullest sense of the word, but merely its forerunner. The great Time of Trouble of the Scriptures will be brought on by anarchy--the general uprising of the people; as the Prophet says, "every man's hand against his neighbor, no peace to him that goeth out or to him that cometh in."--Zechariah 8:10.

FRUIT OF THE VINE OF THE EARTH

The Lord declares that He has a hand in these matters that are a natural outcome of human selfishness, aggressiveness and greed. The Lord has to do with all this, in that at the appropriate time He granted to the world the knowledge which is stirring them up. In other words, men with sin and selfishness in their hearts are not in a position to use knowledge wisely, rightly. Without reflecting upon any person or class we can see that if the knowledge that is in the world should continue to increase, a certain few, by that increase of knowledge, would get far ahead of the others--until finally the wealth would be massed in the hands of the very few, and the whole world would become the serfs of these few. The money in the hands of the wealthy increases rapidly. On the other hand the population doubles in a century. Who cannot see that under present conditions there would eventually be nothing but slavery for the masses, governed by an autocracy?

As long as governments are strong, their overthrow will be impossible. Our thought, often presented in these columns, is that a great war will weaken the nations, preparatory to the period of anarchy. Such a great war, crippling the world financially and discrediting the rulers in the eyes of their peoples, will open the way for the anarchy. The people of former times looked upon their rulers as demi-gods. This veneration for authority still obtains to some extent, especially in Russia, where the people almost worship the Czar--except those who are anarchists. The present war is the one we have expected. It will drain the world of blood and treasure. Then the nations, sick, weak, faint, will fall a prey to Socialism, which will become anarchy. Thus in accord with the Bible predictions earth will be prepared to welcome Messiah's

THE PROPER ATTITUDE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

"Wait ye upon Me, saith the Lord, until that Day when I rise up to the prey; for My determination is to gather the nations, that I may bring the nations together to pour upon them Mine indignation, even all My fierce anger; for the whole [social] earth shall be devoured by the fire of Mine anger. And then will I turn unto the people a pure Message."--Zephaniah 3:8,9.

What did Jehovah mean by "wait ye"? He meant that we are to wait for His time. He told us of the general leveling of the things of this world; He declared that all the kingdoms will be submerged in general anarchy. There will be a fervency of heat, discussion, tumult, strife, and at this time the nations of the world will "melt" --go down quickly. We believe this. We are not thinking of Christians as contending with the sword; for those who take the sword are to perish by it, our Lord said. God's people are to stand aloof, recognizing that "the powers that be are ordained of God," in that He permits them, while He has full power to make changes. If He permits them, it is not for us to seek to overthrow them.

This symbolic burning of the world is sometimes referred to by secular writers. In the newspapers we frequently read about "the great conflagration"--speaking of this fire of trouble, strife, confusion. The elements that will "melt with fervent heat" will be the labor element, the artisan element, the capitalistic element, the religious element, etc. The Lord has been gathering the nations, as He said He would in this "Day"--within the last forty years. This gathering means the drawing of the nations together. All the nations of Europe--and even China--are nearer to us today than Chicago was seventy years ago. The Nations are drawn closely together by the Atlantic and Pacific cables, so that China and Japan are within a few hours' communication with us, and a financial panic affects the whole world within twenty-four hours.

While the Lord has been doing this work, we are not to think that He is pitting these nations against each other. He has permitted them to work out their selfish propensities, and the result is strife. Knowledge is doing this--bringing on the restless social condition.

THE FINAL OUTLOOK

We see that this war has been brought on by very peculiar circumstances. Russia and Austria have each long been anxious to have an opening to the Mediterranean; but they have been fearful that a great war would result from any attempt to secure it. They have more or less "egged on" the smaller states--the Balkan States. They have done everything that they could to weaken each other's influence in these states--the "Buffer States," as they are called. Paid agents have been sent into that region by one nation to create antagonism against the other.

Austria thought that she had a good excuse for war

against Serbia on account of the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne by a Servian. She hoped that this excuse would seem to be sufficient. She hoped that Russia would say nothing; or that, otherwise, Germany's shaken fist would deter her. But this time it did not work. Russia determined to support the Servians, who are her kinsfolk; and this has brought in the other nations.

Apparently the great European kings and emperors realize that their own thrones are tottering, and also that this war may unify their people. The willingness of the people is an important factor in connection with any war. A war with another nation is preferable to the civil strife of a social upheaval. Their judgment is approved by facts. A Socialist in Paris the other day said something against the war, and he was assassinated immediately.

Our thought is that this war will so weaken all the nations, so impoverish them, as to make them ready for the anarchy which the Bible portrays. The disbanding of the troops and the returning of them to their homes, disappointed, dissatisfied and angry with the kings, rulers,

R5527 : page 260

nobles, will result in the anarchy which will doubtless prevail throughout Europe--and extend to every nation, as the Bible predicts. We understand that Christ's Kingdom is associated with this in the sense that Christ is about to take to Himself His great power and reign. The Lord speaks of the anarchists as "His great army" in a figurative way, just as He speaks of the caterpillars, which are used figuratively to represent His army. The saints will not be in that army at all. The Lord has used even the Devil as His agent, and "the wrath of man to praise Him." Anarchists may be part of the Lord's great army in that He will supervise their campaign.

Eventually, the United States will become involved, and so fall with the other nations; not necessarily because the United States will engage in this war, however. To do so would be very foolish indeed. Our government is strong because the people govern themselves; they have their own government and their own liberties, and can change their own laws. We believe that they are doing this more and more, and are preparing to do so still further, so that finally our Government will come down to a socialistic basis. But before this shall happen, the wealthy, seeking to protect themselves, will doubtless bring things to pass in violation of the laws, and will thus precipitate trouble, believing that they are resisting injustice. Wise would it be for all to accept as gracefully as possible the inevitable leveling; but will they be wise?

It is human nature to make the streets run with blood rather than to suffer defeat and surrender "vested rights." The people are being led on by hatred, and an appeal to unreason. While certain truths are presented, the presentation is not truthful. But many are being inoculated, and are preparing, as they think, for Socialism--we

would say, for anarchism, here as easily as in Europe.

ARMAGEDDON STILL FUTURE

While it is possible that Armageddon may begin next Spring, yet it is purely speculation to attempt to say just when. We see, however, that there are parallels between the close of the Jewish Age and this Gospel Age. These parallels seem to point to the year just before us--particularly the early months.

The Scriptures indicate that the Gentile governments will receive from their own peoples their first notice that their lease of power has expired. The people will take note of the sign of the Son of Man in the heavens. The judgments of the Lord will begin to be manifest in the world, and will run counter to many of their interests. This manifestation of His presence is Scripturally called the Epiphania, the shining forth, the revealment, of the King of Glory. "He shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.) As a result, the nations of earth will be broken to pieces like a potter's vessel.--Psalm 2:8,9.

The prophetic forecast tells us that the trouble will begin in the ecclesiastical heavens, and later will proceed to the social element. The picture given of the end of Gentile Times is that of a stone striking the image of Gentile supremacy in its feet. (Daniel 2:34,35.) The impact will be so sharp and so thorough as to leave nothing of them. Having had their day, they will cease to be--"become like the chaff of the summer threshing floor." The next event in order will be the Messianic Kingdom, of which it is written, "The desire of all peoples shall come."

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R5527 : page 261

"MAN PROPOSES--GOD DISPOSES"

[REPRINT FROM OUR ISSUE OF OCTOBER 15, 1898.]

"The world by wisdom knows not God." "Going about to establish a righteousness of their own they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God."--1 Cor. 1:21; Rom. 10:3.

MEN of energy and ambition are, more frequently than others, used of the Lord; because they are instruments ready for service. If the energy and ambition be thoroughly subjected to the Lord--controlled by high spirituality, humility and veneration toward the Creator, and with large individuality and independence of

character and firmness toward men--it will lead to reverent and careful study of the Divine will and to persistence and assiduity in its prosecution. Such characters God is pleased to use for the great things of His service. Next to our Lord Jesus, the Apostle Paul is an ideal illustration of such a character: God was pleased to use him largely as a mouth-piece and as a servant of the Truth--in proportion to his humility, loyalty and energy.

And likewise, but in an opposite direction, God has been pleased to use the energetic and ambitious among the worldly--whose motive power was not love, loyalty and humility, but to the contrary--selfish pride, vainglory. God often uses such characters in another kind of service--causing their ambitious energies ("wrath") to praise Him, and the remainder (beyond what suits His purposes) He restrains. Illustrations of this stamp of character are seen in Satan, in Judas, and in persons in less prominent positions in the Church--even today. These are active in planting "roots of bitterness, by which many are defiled" and sifted out, stumbled--leaving the remainder stronger and purer. See the inspired Word on this subject--"I hear that there be divisions among you; and as to a certain part I believe it; and there must needs be also partyism among you [permitted of the Lord], that they that are approved may be made manifest among you." "Brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses, in violation of the doctrine which ye have learned [the royal law of Love]; and avoid them." "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." (1 Cor. 11:18; Rom. 16:17; 1 John 2:19.) It is doubtless as necessary that the Church be sifted, purged, tested, as that it be "built up"; and for either work God uses the ready and willing.

But our thoughts run specially in the channel of God's supervision of earthly affairs and His use of worldly ambitions in world-affairs. In this direction Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander and Napoleon I. are notable examples of the past--men of destiny, over whose affairs Providence had a supervision. God utilized the energies and ambitions of these men in the forwarding of His plans and in the fulfilment of His predictions--and their further ambitious efforts He restrained by His superior power, as it pleased Him. Our thoughts pursue this course, because we perceive such a worldly ambition to do something notable, to achieve a world-wide fame, possessing a man of opportunity today--the German Emperor; and we regard him as likely to be to some extent another "man of destiny."

EMPEROR WILLIAM'S AMBITION

As Lord Herschel was guided by his science to search for a new planet and thus discovered one, some students

of the greatest of all sciences--the Divine Revelation, the Bible--are guided thereby to search for its promised "things to come" (John 16:13), and, as was promised, they find them and thus are permitted to anticipate history. For instance, the "Watchers" know, from the unfolding of the Scriptures which God has provided them, that astounding changes, social, religious, and political, are just before us--to be accomplished within the next sixteen years: we note the Scripture testimony that just prior to the great collapse in anarchy there is to be a revival of Papal influence in the world; and that Protestantism, considerably unified or federated, will be in practical sympathy and co-operation with Papacy; and that in fact (though not in theory) Catholicism and Protestantism will for a short time jointly rule the civilized world (through the civil powers) and appear to have begun a human Millennium. But while the cries of Peace! Peace!! are still heard, will come the great cataclysm of social revolution which shall demolish all present institutions and demonstrate the futility of all selfish human schemes, and by heart-breaking discouragements prepare mankind for the great blessing which God has in store.

Naturally, the "Watchers" are on the lookout for every sign of the times seeming to harmonize with the known coming events. Indeed, our interest in the "news of the day" is chiefly with the fragments, which seem to have a connection with or a bearing upon the fulfilments of prophecy. And knowing that God generally uses "a man of opportunity" for His work, we are struck with the fact that the German Emperor, who evidently is seeking a notable destiny, has lately been giving expression to ambitions that seem closely related to Scriptural predictions. And his determination and pride will impel him so far as possible to make good his boasts; added to which he freely and repeatedly declares that he feels himself led and impelled in this direction by an unseen power, or "voice," which spurs him on to success. And a success on one point or issue would surely lead such a man to larger schemes in the same direction. God "raised him up" to the throne of the German Empire (in probably the same way that He raised Pharaoh up to the throne of Egypt at the time of Israel's deliverance) by taking out of the way, by death, his father--a man of very different temperament and ambitions. What would be more reasonable than to suppose of William II. that (as it is written of one brought miraculously to the throne of old) God brought him "to the throne, for such a time as this," and for the work he is ambitious to accomplish?

The Emperor's ambition is to restore to "religion" some of its former power by which it co-operated with the civil rulers in the control of the world. Not that he would desire to reproduce "the dark ages" of priestcraft and superstition, and of inquisition, the stake and the rack; but that he considers those evils, not in the light of the Scriptures, but in the light of today's world-wisdom, attributing those evils to the ignorance of the times and

not to the false teachings of Anti-Christ.

He reasons that Romanism is rejuvenating and adapting itself to twentieth century conditions and can be trusted as much as Protestantism, so far as the maintenance of present governments is concerned; and that, after all, is to him the all-important matter. Indeed, he seems to feel that the revival of Papal influence is a necessity anyway on the ground that of two evils the less should be chosen to avert the greater.

From the Emperor's own statement of his ambitious designs (published in the public prints) as related to General Hoffmann Scholz, and doubtless designed

R5527 : page 262

for publication, we furnish the following extract:

"At the present day two great evils threaten humanity. They are Socialism and Atheism. Against each of these the pope is a bulwark. In fighting infidelity no aid should be neglected. Socialism is infidelity to the monarch or the State, and Atheism is infidelity to God.

"The Pope is the spiritual ruler of the largest communion on earth, and he is by far the most powerful and authoritative of spiritual rulers. His word is promptly and willingly obeyed by hundreds of millions of people spread throughout the globe. He can order and direct the consciences of these multitudes. He can say: These are your religious tenets; those must be your social sentiments; and suddenly he is obeyed. His power therefore for good is immeasurable.

"Kings and emperors are the Divinely ordained guardians of social order and directors of social well-being, just as the leaders of religious bodies are the Divinely ordained moderators of conscience. But just as kings and emperors can have their beneficent influence in the religious order, so can spiritual guides help and promote the social weal.

"The pope's range of power is the vastest of all, and consequently the possibilities of the good he may do are the most far-reaching. I think it imperative therefore that he be put in a position to freely accomplish all the good of which he is capable. He must be liberated from his self-imposed imprisonment in the Vatican. All the trammels that surround and harass him in his daily life must be removed, so that he will then be at liberty to fight the common enemies, Socialism and irreligion. And he will be in a position to make his voice heard in the interests of peace, when nations go to war without just motive, and in the interest of humanity, when acts of cruelty or injustice are being anywhere committed.

"I have meditated long and deeply on this subject. The fact that it preoccupies me so much convinces me that I am inspired to take action in the matter. It is like one of the voices that Socrates had about with him which whispers in my ear that this also is my mission to remedy the pope's position and open up the field for his range of

well-doing. It daily urges me to act. Whether I shall succeed or not is beyond my power to foretell. Judging from the circumstances there is every evidence that success should not be outside the bounds of possibility. I am going to do my utmost, and more than this no man can do.

"I feel for the moment that I have no other concrete and practical mission before me. To succeed in such an undertaking would be a climax and a crowning worthy of any man's life. As I say, I will energetically attempt it. The small preternatural voice unmistakably spurs me on, and I think than this no better augury of success could be desired.

"For this moment I can say no more, and it does not behoove me to be too explicit about my plans. They are already laid, and my immediate actions will be a development of them. Their result will be their justification, and it will also be the justification of many acts in the past, which may have seemed strange and unaccountable to my good Protestant subjects, but which had their motive and their origin in a desire to accomplish great and enduring events....

"I shall not die until my ends in this regard are attained. Death otherwise would find a void in my existence; and I feel within me that I have not been born in vain."

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R5527 : page 262

THE TRIED AND PROVEN PEOPLE

"The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."-- Deut. 13:3.

GOD HAD entered into a Covenant with the Children of Israel, in harmony with His promise made to Abraham their father. Four hundred and thirty years after His Covenant with Abraham, the Lord had called Israel out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and had made them a nation in the wilderness. He had proposed to them that if they would keep His Law and His statutes He would make of them a great people, above all other peoples of the earth. They had entered into this Covenant with the Lord, and had declared that they were very glad to accept this Divine arrangement and to have the opportunity of carrying God's blessing eventually to all mankind. But now Israel was about to cross over Jordan and enter the land of Promise. Before parting from them, Moses explained to them that it was not enough that they had accepted the conditions of the Covenant and become the Lord's people: God would test them, would prove them.

Why should God prove them? As a people they had left Egypt under the leadership of the chosen servant of God. They had crossed the Red Sea, and sung their praises for deliverance. They had journeyed forty years in the wilderness. They had been refreshed with the water from the smitten rock. They had been fed with the bread from Heaven. God knew all about them when He took them for His people. What more could He wish?

Ah! but their fathers had rebelled against God, and had fallen in the wilderness because of sin, because they had murmured against Him whom they had covenanted to serve. And now Moses explained that God wished to prove to what extent the Covenant would be kept by these their children. He said: You have entered into this agreement which God made with your fathers. You have made a consecration to be the servants of the Lord. Now, are you ready to perform the terms of your agreement? "The Lord your God doth prove you, to see whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."--Deuteronomy 13:3.

GOD'S WONDERFUL CARE OVER ISRAEL

Do you appreciate God? was the query. Do you realize the value of His kindness? Do you truly love Him with all your being--with all your powers, your strength? Are you fully surrendered to the Lord? For "thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness--to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or no. He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that He might make thee to know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.

R5527 : page 263

"For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness; thou shalt not lack anything in it. ...When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which He hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping His commandments and His judgments and His statutes, which I command thee this day."

--Deuteronomy 8:2-11.

SUPREME FAVORS TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

What an exhortation! What an incentive to faithfulness! Who would not worship and serve such a God! And what a wonderful application can Spiritual Israel make of this Scripture! How marvelously has our God led us, His Covenant people, through the wilderness of this world, and provided for our needs day by day! How the chastenings of His loving hand have kept our feet from wandering; or if we have turned at any time to the right hand, or to the left, how has His love drawn us back! And has He not brought us into a good land, a land of brooks of water, a land of fountains and depths, a land of oil olive and honey, a land wherein we eat bread, the Bread of Heaven, without scarceness? Truly, we have not lacked anything in it. If Israel of old had reason to prove their gratitude and love to God, how much more reason have we, Spiritual Israel!

MOSES' DYING MESSAGE

After Moses had reminded Israel of all the loving kindnesses of the Lord on their behalf and of their solemn Covenant, he proclaimed to them the ordinances of the Lord by which they were to be governed, and then gave them most solemn warnings of the consequences of forgetting God and breaking their Covenant. This discourse,

R5528 : page 263

of which our text is a part, and which comprises the larger part of the Book of Deuteronomy, was delivered to Israel just before Moses' death in Mount Nebo--the highest point of the ridge of Pisgah--whence the Lord showed him all the land of Canaan, and where he was buried. God had told Moses that He should not go over Jordan, because of his disobedience at the waters of Meribah, when he smote the rock contrary to the command of God. This discourse was his last message to Israel, and is very touching and impressive.

Moses finished his message with these words: "I call Heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed mayest live, that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him; for He is thy life, and the length of thy days, that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them." Such words were very forceful at such a time; for Moses had told them that he was about to die, and that God would give them a new leader to go with them over Jordan.

ONLY "ISRAELITES INDEED" ARE SOUGHT

As a matter of fact, we know that Israel did not live up to their engagement, as God had assured Moses would be the case. They were like unto their fathers who died in the wilderness. During the centuries of their dwelling in Canaan, however, there were quite a large number who individually proved worthy of the blessing and favor of the Lord. St. Paul refers to these in Hebrews 11, and declares their loyalty to God. These are to have a "better resurrection" than their brethren or than mankind in general. The Apostle mentions such characters as Moses, Samuel, David, and many of the prophets and others who were not so honored and prominent as these in an earthly way, but who had the honor of having pleased God.

Their serving the Lord with all their heart and soul could not justify them legally; for they were imperfect and blemished through the fall. But all the powers they had were devoted to the Lord. These became heirs of God--not heirs in the highest sense, because this opportunity was not open in their time. No one could gain this highest position until the Redeemer had come and opened the way. So all these worthy ones who lived prior to the Christian Era, died in faith, not having received the promise, i. e., its fulfilment. But "they looked for a City which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God." And soon these faithful servants of the Lord will "stand up for their portion."

But we, the Church, must all first be perfected. In this class our Lord Jesus holds the highest place, and by the sacrifice of Himself He opened the door of opportunity to His brethren of the elect class. "Israelites indeed" were honored with this invitation to become joint-heirs with Christ, sons of God. Only those who love God with all their heart and soul are "Israelites indeed." The average Israelite of our Lord's day was not fit to be of this select company; only "Israelites indeed" accepted the invitation. Throughout this Gospel Age these true Israelites have been entering into this wonderful favor with all their heart and with all their soul.

It is not because we are more nearly perfect in the flesh that we have obtained this great favor, but because the Lord opened the way, and because we had a love for righteousness and an honesty of heart. Those who lived before our time, during the Law Covenant Dispensation and prior to it, needed justification also; and the same Redeemer who has purchased us has through His sacrifice provided justification for them, that they too may ultimately come into the blessed relationship of sons of God.

IS GOD'S KNOWLEDGE LIMITED?

The way in which this expression of our text is put might give the impression that God does not know the hearts of men. The Scriptures assure us that God can fully read the heart, "that all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do"--no

thought or purpose of our heart is hidden from Him. But when we think of the Almighty--what He knows or what He does not know--we are at a loss to form an opinion. So far as our experience goes, there is no one who could know just what he himself would do under any given condition in the future. We may think what we would probably do, but we are not sure. And if we are not sure that we ourselves know what we would do, we cannot see how any one else could know what we would do. We cannot by any mental process understand how it would be possible for God to know what we might do tomorrow, unless He coerced our mind or hedged up our way, so that we could do only one certain thing.

In the matter of the Gentile Times, God permitted various governments--Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Grecia and Rome--to rule the world successively. We can understand how He could say: "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." The tendency of sin in the fallen race would lead people to go to any length, if not restrained. In such ways, we can understand how God would know in advance. He knows, too, when the Church will be selected, as He has a definite Plan concerning this selection. He knew that Satan would have the disposition to raise up an Anti-Christ System--a counterfeit of the true

R5528 : page 264

Church. He knew how many saints within a given time could be developed under those conditions, and how much time would thus be necessary to gather His predestinated number; for He purposed to permit Satan to operate within certain bounds for the testing of His professed people.

It would not be wise for us to say that there are some things that God could not know, that He does not know--or that there is anything that God does not know--but we can say that we are not able to understand how God could know what we shall think tomorrow, or next week. God made man a free moral agent; and He always respects this free agency, and gives us the opportunity of exercising our own wills. He is not pleased to have people who would work automatically. He permits us to make our own decisions. He has given us His Word, He gives us all needed assistances, and He will help all who are seeking to walk in His way. But these questions, we trust, will all be solved for us ere long. We know that God proves His professed people and demonstrates their heart attitude just as if He did not know--perhaps only as a proof to angels and men.

WHAT WILL THE ISSUE BE?

God is proving the Church now. There are many of the professed Church of Christ who have never made a covenant with God at all. But He is testing all those who have made a covenant, as to whether or not it is a heart-consecration --whether it is self first or God first--whether

it is success in life or the honor of God and the doing of His will. He is trying us because He wishes to find out who will be worthy of a place with His Son on the Throne, who will be worthy to reign with Him in the Kingdom, and who of the remainder will be worthy of a place in the company of antitypical Levites, and finally, who will be deserving of the Second Death.

Ours, therefore, is not only the high honor of being sons of God during this Gospel Age, but also of being proved for the lasting rewards. The Jews that knowingly lived in violation of their Law lost merely their temporal life, but did not forfeit their opportunity for the eternal life. But if any of us do likewise, we shall forfeit the life eternal. Therefore, the dealing of God with us goes beyond His dealing with Natural Israel. Our responsibility, then, is so much the greater, and the issue is final.

The Kingdom is designed only for those who by the grace of God shall in heart, in character, become like the Master, in that they will love the Lord with all their heart, with all their soul (all their present capacity), and be able to say: "Not My will, but Thine, O Lord, be done." No other heart condition than this of entire submission to God in Christ can make us acceptable for the Kingdom; for no other condition represents full loyalty and full love to God. Let us not forget that all the Heavenly glories and blessings, which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," God has prepared only for them who love Him supremely--and who prove this love. But His grace will be sufficient for our every need.

"Then let us bid each doubt remove--
Those doubts that fain would rise--
And view the Canaan that we love
With unclouded eyes!
Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore!"

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R5528 : page 264

WHAT IS EVIL SPEAKING?

"Speak evil of no man."--Titus 3:2.

THE Apostle's injunction is very positive; we are to speak evil of none. The question then arises, What does St. Paul mean here? Does he mean that we should speak nothing of any man with an evil intention toward him? Or does he mean, Speak no evil, whatever the intention? We answer, we surely know that to speak evil with a wrong

motive, a wrong intention, would be a heinous crime, especially in a child of God. But we think the Apostle meant, No matter what your motive, speak evil about nobody. If that be the Apostle's thought--and we believe it hardly controvertible--it places a very stringent requirement upon all of the Lord's people. If the motive for speaking evil were bad, all the worse; but good or bad, "Speak evil of no man."

Now another question comes up, What is evil-speaking? We answer, This subject has various sides. To speak evil is to speak that which is injurious; therefore one should say nothing that would injure any man. It is very easy to perceive the justice and the reasonableness of this requirement if we apply the Golden Rule. Would we wish any one to do us evil? Would we wish any to speak slightly of us, to comment on our faults, or on what the speaker considered faults, and thus lower us in the eyes of others? If the Lord's people would learn to apply the Golden Rule to every affair of life, it would surely be very helpful.

Some of the most conscientious Christians have difficulty along this line. In considering this matter of evil-speaking, some think, Is my motive right? They forget that their motive in speaking derogatively of others has nothing to do with the Apostle's injunction. No matter what the motive, we are not to speak evil. The question is not, Did I have a good intention or a bad one? but, Am I speaking evil? Am I saying anything contrary to the Golden Rule--something that I would not wish to have said of me? We would that we could instil this thought into the hearts and minds of every reader of this journal.

IS REPORTING VIOLATION OF RULES EVIL-SPEAKING?

Now comes another question, How should we apply the injunction of our text in the case of the home, for instance, or the office? Suppose that we are connected with an office or a home where certain rules are laid down for the government of that office or home. Would it in such a case be evil-speaking on our part to report any violation of those rules? We do not consider this evil-speaking. If we were ourselves violating those rules, the person who would report us would be doing right--not doing us evil or wrong or injury. By not reporting the misdemeanor or violation of rules, the person would be encouraging in us a continuation of the wrong course.

God's people are supposed always to have no other than good motives for any course pursued. To have any but a good motive in dealing with others would be to have a murderous motive. We are not, therefore, to take the motive into consideration. But a person who accepts a position in an office, a home or an institution accepts also the conditions and sundry rules connected with such a position. Doubtless nearly all rules and regulations in an office or home are made, not with the view of injuring any one, but for the general welfare of the business or the

family or whatever it may be. Hence the observance of all these obligations should be considered a serious responsibility.

R5529 : page 265

One should not report an infraction of rules in an evil way, but merely as a fact.

It is not necessary for the one who informs to judge the heart of the one reported. It is not a question of a bad heart. If one has a foolish brain, or is forgetful or inattentive and violates important rules, it is not judging the heart to report such a case--and especially where there is a rule that such cases be reported. It is merely a matter of duty--a thing that is required, and is both necessary and proper. We see this principle laid down in God's workmanship in our bodies. If something occurs in the body--for instance, if a finger is being pinched--the nerves immediately telegraph to the brain. If a foot is hurt, the fact is telegraphed to the brain at once. Suppose there were no means of communicating the injury of a member of the body to the brain. Suppose there were no nerves of sensation to convey the message. One might not know whether or not he had lost a finger or a toe. He would not know when he had lost a foot, until he stumbled and fell.

SUBJECT NOT TO BE DISCUSSED WITH THE OFFENDER

We should not be always looking to see if our own personal matters are being impinged. We know that we, as well as others, have imperfections. If others inadvertently tread upon our toes, we know that we are likely to sometimes tread on others' toes. But personal matters are different from those that belong to the family or to the office. It is not busybodying to report violations of the rules of the house or of the office. It is to the interest of every member of a family or an institution that the interests of the whole body be looked after, in a proper and reasonable way.

It would not be proper for any one in an office to attempt to set straight every one else in the office. It is not for any one to go around and correct others; this is not his business. But if another is breaking rules, it is his business to report the facts--the facts, without any coloring whatever. If we would do otherwise, if each one who notes an infraction would go to the one who violated the rules, and thus attempt to settle all the affairs of the office or the family, there would be continual confusion. The one who broke the rule would be disposed to defend himself and to say, "My course was all right, and it is none of your affair whether that gate was left open or shut," etc. But if that gate is left open, it is your duty to report the matter to the proper authority, and thus you are relieved of the responsibility of the affair. This is not a personal matter, such as to be dealt with according to Matthew 18:15-18. It would not be our duty to tell Tom,

Dick, Harry, Mary or Jane about the matter. There is just one person to whom we should tell it; and the report should be made with all kindly feeling.

One would soon get himself into trouble if he were to try to run an entire house or office by going to various ones to endeavor to set them right. But if there were a new-comer, and he were unintentionally violating a rule, it might be well to say; It is a rule of the house to do thus and so. But it would not be proper to mention this fact to him more than once. A second violation should be reported, though in a loving spirit.

MISCELLANEOUS CASES

Applying the question to our proper course in the Church, in matters relating to ourselves personally, we see where our individual responsibility lies. "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Our Lord does not refer to what he does against some one else, but against "thee." "Well," some one may object, "I think he was doing something against so-and-so." We have heard some one say: "I think Brother So-and-so does not treat his wife right." We reply, "That is his business and his wife's business; it is not your business. Your business is to look after your own wife or husband, your own parents, your own children, and let other people alone. We advise that you practise on yourself. Do your duty in respect to your own affairs, and refrain from comments on those of others."

But suppose we saw something radically wrong, suppose we were going along the street and saw a man cruelly beating a horse, should we say nothing? In such a case, if we saw a policeman, we might say, "Will you take notice of how that man is abusing that horse?" Or it might be reported to the humane society, if there were one in the locality. If a parent were brutally beating a child, or something of that kind, it would be proper to report the matter to the authorities. But it is not the business of every one to go about attempting to straighten out matters in general. The world is full of evil, and will be until the Kingdom shall take control.

We think that as far as the Church is concerned the number of difficulties we see in the world would better be let alone as a rule; for if we should start out to right everything that is wrong, we would not have any time left for serving the King of kings and Lord of lords. Our time is limited enough, at best. People already misjudge us; therefore we do well not to add unnecessarily to the opposition. If the time ever came when we were through with all our duties to the Church and to our families, then we might see to some of these outside matters. But we have very little time, and it leaves us very small opportunity to attend to any other matters except our necessary duties and our service for the Lord and the brethren. And for this we should be very thankful; for then if there is opposition against us, it will be only because we have

been faithful to our Heavenly King.

Our King has not given us authority as yet to set the matters of the world straight. But we are instructed that we should, as we have opportunity, make known the principles of righteousness, without getting into any dispute. When our King comes in and begins His Reign, and we are exalted with Him, we will show the world what a government should be! But, indeed, it seems surprising how good the laws are even now. We are simply amazed as we think of the good laws of the State of New York, for instance. It is wonderful how the State tries to take care of the interests of the majority, and how much is done for the people; we are glad that the poor world has been able to do so well. We admire what they have done under such adverse conditions. What a grand time it will be, and what a grand world it will be, when everything is under the Law of Righteousness!

ANOTHER PHASE OF THE QUESTION

But coming back to this matter of evil-speaking in the Church; suppose that a brother has been nominated for the position of Elder or Deacon, and suppose that in our judgment he is unfit for such an office, for certain reasons known to us, but not known to the rest of the Ecclesia. What should be our course in the matter? We are admonished to speak evil of no man. Should we then get up and say, "Brethren, I consider Brother A. wholly unfit to be an Elder; I know that he did thus-and-so; that he cheated a woman out of a sum of money"--or whatever the charge might be. Shall we say this? No, indeed! Is it our duty to speak evil in the interests of the Church, to do evil that good may come? Certainly not! But the old creature always wants a chance to speak evil; give him half a chance and he will soon tell all that he knows!

R5530 : page 266

Then what shall we do? Well, if we were ourself a member of that congregation, we think we would go over and speak to the brother thus nominated, and say, "Brother A., there are certain matters which I have learned about you which I do not wish to mention to anybody. I would not wish to speak evil of you at all, dear brother. But I believe that this feature of your life is wrong, and that it would not be right for this Congregation to elect you. I do not wish to tell them about this matter. I wish to ask you if you will refuse to serve. If you promise that you will decline to be elected, that is all that is necessary. Or if you think that my point is not well taken, just state the matter publicly to them. If you do not do this, and do not refuse to be elected, then I must state the matter publicly--I will have to tell what I know; for you know it is as I state it. I have come to you in kindness and have no desire to injure you."

If the brother answers, "Well, Brother _____, I will

decline the nomination; and as regards the matter you mention, I am trying to get the better of it"--then we would tell him we are very glad. We believe that we would in this way do that brother good. We would also be preserving the Class from what would be hurtful or contentious, and would be keeping the peace. If, on the other hand, the brother should be disputatious, we would say to him, "You may be sure that I will explain this matter to the Church, if you do not decline the nomination; for thereby you are saying that you approve your course in life and are standing by it."

But if the matter were something that occurred in the brother's life long ago, he might be entirely changed by now--in the matter of a year, or two years, or five years, or whatever. We would be glad if he were changed from the old course. Then we might go to the brother and say, "Brother, I notice that you stood for election. Is your life entirely changed?" If he replied, "Yes, Brother; it is changed entirely," then we would be glad. But if he got angry and told us it was none of our business, we would say, "Now, Brother, I must make a report of this to the Church. You are indicating by your manner that you are advocating the same course that you took before. If I had done such a wrong, and continued to do wrong, I would wish to have my course checked. So I shall report this matter, that the Class may consider again whether they will have you for an Elder (or a Deacon)." But suppose that the Brother should not be nominated for office in the Church? Then we would consider that his past was none of our affair.

A CONCLUDING WORD OF EXHORTATION

Anything injurious to the real interests of another should never be spoken. We cannot be too careful of our words concerning others. There seems to be a tendency with some of the Lord's children to indulge in confidences with others of the brethren and to relate incidents that reflect upon another brother or sister, that show up certain manifestations of weakness in that one. The disposition that thus exposes the imperfections of the brethren is surely not the love that covers. (1 Peter 4:8.) We know some who have been long in the narrow way, who do not seem even yet to have overcome this disposition. Do they forget that they themselves have weaknesses perhaps as pronounced as the brother or sister whom they criticize? The very fact that they ignore the Master's injunction along the line of our text proves their own lack of development. Yet these would probably resent the implication that they are guilty of evil-speaking.

The sooner every follower of Christ comes to see that all this is slander, that it is besmirching the good name of a brother or sister, that it is a direct violation of the repeated injunction of the Word of God, and that defamation is theft of another's reputation, the sooner they will see this subject as it really is, in all its hideousness--as it

must appear in the sight of the Lord. Once seeing the matter from the Divine standpoint, the only true standpoint, the child of God must surely awaken to the greatest possible energy in overcoming such works of the flesh and of the Devil. Let each one who reads these words search his or her own heart and think over his or her own conduct, and then ask the question, "Is it I?"

Let every one who hopes to be accounted worthy of a place in the Kingdom, so soon to come, purge out the old leaven of malice, envy, backbiting and strife, if any yet remain, that he or she may become indeed a copy of God's dear Son. The flesh is very seductive, and is inclined to make all manner of excuses for itself. Let each one make this a matter of personal heart-searching. There is, we believe, only a very little while remaining in which to perfect our characters. Let us pray more earnestly than ever, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth! Keep Thou the door of my lips!"

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R5530 : page 266

JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS

--SEPTEMBER 20.--MATTHEW 25:31-46.--

"Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not unto Me."--Verse 45.

HAVING given His disciples many parables illustrating the experiences of the Church, the Kingdom class, in their development and preparation for Kingdom honor, it was eminently proper that Jesus should give the parable of this lesson to illustrate the work of this Kingdom after its establishment--to show its purpose, and its effect upon the world of mankind.

Many of us have in the past read the Bible too carelessly. Our minds were sluggish respecting spiritual things. For instance, today's lesson was at one time applied to the Church. We failed altogether to notice that it says not a word respecting the Church, but is entirely applied to the world, to the nations, the heathen. For centuries the Jews had been accustomed to think of themselves as God's nation, God's people. All others they styled heathen, Gentiles, the people, the nations; and in the prophecies God treated the matter from this standpoint. So when Spiritual Israel was received into Divine favor as the Royal Priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, all the remainder of mankind were properly enough to be thought of and described as "the nations," "the Gentiles."

In line with this, our Lord in this parable tells what is to befall after His Kingdom shall have been set up--

after the selection of the true Church class to be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife and Joint-heir in His Kingdom, in His Throne. This, we notice, is very clearly stated by the Master, saying, "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the Throne of His glory." Who, after proper consideration, will say that this is a matter of the past? Who will dispute that this is a description of Messiah's Kingdom following His Parousia and His Epiphania at His Second Advent?

APPLICATION OF THIS PARABLE

Then follows a description of the work of the Millennial

R5530 : page 267

Age. "Before Him shall be gathered all nations." This means all the people of the world outside of the Lord's holy nation, His peculiar people, the Church. Everybody except the Church will be before His great white Throne of Justice, Mercy and Love; that will be their judgment time.

Six thousand years ago, Adam and his entire race were judged in Eden, and the sentence was death. None of the race are worthy of everlasting life. They are all sinners. In due time God sent His Son to die for Adam's sin, in order that, "as by a man came death [of the entire race], by a man [Jesus] also will come the resurrection of the dead" [the entire race]. "For as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive"--"every man in his own order."--1 Corinthians 15:21,22.

The first order to be made alive in Christ is the Church, called out of the world, separated, "begotten again" of the Holy Spirit. These pass their judgment, their trial, for life everlasting or death everlasting in the present time. Hence the worthy ones, with characters formed pleasing and acceptable to God, will be quite ready to be Messiah's Bride class, joint-heirs with Him in His Kingdom and in His work of judging the world. He has promised that all the faithful shall sit with Him in His Throne--the very Throne pictured in the words of our text--the Throne before which all the nations, all the people outside of the Church, will be gathered.

The gathering of the world will be the result of knowledge. The Time of Trouble will lead on to great enlightenment, in which all the blind eyes will be opened, all the deaf ears will be unstopped, and the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth. Some there will be who, resisting this knowledge, will decline to accept Christ and will not come into this judgment; but after a hundred years of resistance these will be destroyed.

Those in the parable are such as have accepted Christ's terms and desire to be on judgment, or on trial, for everlasting life. This will include all in their graves, who, the

Master tells us, will come forth, not all at once, but gradually. Messiah's Kingdom will exercise its power and disseminate the knowledge of God and of righteousness, with a view to encouraging, helping and uplifting all the willing and obedient. All such may rise more and more out of sin and death conditions--out of imperfection of mind and body and out of immoral conduct to the full image of God, as possessed by Father Adam in the beginning.

It will be the work of the entire Millennial Age to bring this about. Righteousness will reign then, as sin reigns now. That is to say, it will be in control, in the ascendancy; and whosoever will sin then will suffer promptly. Hence all the nations will be avoiding sin. Then the world in general will be a grand place, where "nothing shall hurt or destroy"; where "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick"; where the curse shall be gradually rolled away, and there shall be no more crying, no more sighing, no more dying; and where the blessing of God, bringing perfection, will prevail. "O happy Day!" we exclaim. And surely it will be such; for all who live through those thousand years will have a great blessing.

THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION OPERATIVE

But, some inquire, what about the sins of the world? Will there be no chastisements, no punishments, for these? We answer that it will be equally as just for God to forgive the sins of the world for Christ's sake as it has been just for Him to forgive the sins of the Church for Christ's sake. If the one is just, so will be the other; for God is no respecter of persons, and is equally as willing to forgive the sins of the world as the sins of the Church, when the world, repenting of sin, will turn from it, accepting Christ as their Redeemer.

This does not mean, however, that justice is to be ignored. In the case of the Church, note how the sins of youth may leave their scar and sting to the end of life. And so we may reasonably assume that certain stripes, or punishments, will be permitted to follow the world in just the same manner. It will be from these weaknesses and frailties that they will be gradually raised up to perfection during those blessed thousand years of Christ's Kingdom, when Satan will be bound and not be permitted to deceive any during that period.

But what about heart condition? If conformity to the Divine Law in an outward way will bring blessings to all, will there not still be a difference between the people--some coming heartily into accord with the Father, and others merely outwardly into harmony, because this outward harmony will be the way to restitution, perfection?

Undoubtedly this is correct reasoning. It is along this line that the parable before us teaches; namely, that outwardly the "sheep" and the "goats" will have much the same appearance and demeanor, except to the Judge, the

King, who will read the heart and ultimately will manifest to all that there has been a real heart-difference between the two classes, all of whom will have been on trial for a thousand years, receiving blessings from the Kingdom.

THE BASIS OF JUDGMENT

All the while each individual will be making character. This character will be fully appreciated by the Great Judge, and the individual will be rated either as a "sheep" or as a "goat." All the sheep-class will thus be received at the right hand of the great Jehovah; and all of the goat-class will be rated as out of favor with Him, even though all the while they will be receiving the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom and outwardly rendering obedience to its laws.

Not until the conclusion of the Millennium will the decision of the Judge be manifested. Then great surprise will be shown at His decision--by both parties. To the "sheep" at His right hand He will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father [the kind that My Father is pleased to bless and to grant everlasting life! Come,] inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." When God laid the foundation of the earth and planned its human habitation, it was His design to give it to you. Now the time has come for you to enter into this kingdom and to possess it.

This is not the same kingdom as the Messianic Kingdom. On the contrary, it is the kingdom which God gave to Adam, which Adam lost through his disobedience and which Christ redeemed by the sacrifice of Himself. It will be given only to those who will have developed the God-like character--those who will have become the Lord's "sheep" during the Millennium.

Then the other class, the goats of the parable, will be sentenced: "Depart, ye accursed ones [doomed ones], into everlasting punishment." Granted all the privileges, blessings and experiences of a thousand years of contact with righteousness, truth and the Spirit of God, you indeed render an outward obedience, but at heart you have not come into harmony with God. I cannot recognize you as My sheep. I cannot present you to the Father blameless and irreprovable. You must be destroyed; the punishment is the Second Death, "everlasting destruction." The penalty upon you is an everlasting one because there will be no further provision made for your redemption or for your resurrection from the Second Death. You will be as though you had never been. You

R5531 : page 268

have failed utterly to appreciate the goodness of God and to copy His character-likeness. Eternal life is only for those who have God's likeness and God's Spirit. "The Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Both classes, the "sheep" and the "goats," were surprised at what the King, the Judge, declared to be the basis of His judgment. To the sheep He said, "I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me." To the goat-class He said, "I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; was a stranger, and ye took Me not in; naked, and ye clothed Me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited Me not."

Both "sheep" and "goats" claimed that they had no knowledge of any such experiences. When did we minister unto Thee? When did we fail to minister unto Thee? The answer was, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of My brethren, or did it not unto him, ye did it, or did it not, unto Me.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SHEEP CLASS

Now, who are these respecting whom there will be a test upon the sheep-class and upon the goat-class? Will there be people sick, hungry and in prison during the Millennium? Does the Lord wish us to understand that there will be such? We have, on the contrary, always assumed that sickness, poverty, hunger and prisons will then be gone forever. What does it all mean?

The meaning is plain. With the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom all who come into harmony with it will have the great privilege of doing something to help others. The world is blind and starved now, for lack of spiritual food and the anointing eye-salve of the Truth. While the Millennial blessings will be showered upon those who accept the Lord's terms, there will be others who will need assistance. Those who have the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Love, will be glad to carry the Heavenly Message of reconciliation to all humanity, glad to apply the eye-salve to the blind, glad to unstop the ears of the deaf, glad to help the sin-sick back into harmony with God--to the blessings of Messiah's Kingdom, to the way in which these may be obtained--helping them to cover their nakedness with the merit of Christ.

All who will take pleasure in this work will thus be manifesting that they have God's Spirit and are co-laborers with Him. All these will be the Sheep. On the other hand, those who will be careless in respect to their Vow, and merely enjoy the Millennial blessings themselves, will be of the goat-class and will thus be marking themselves as "goats," and correspondingly will be out of favor with the great King of kings, their Judge, the Lord of Glory.

THE WORLD'S RESURRECTION

The prison referred to in the parable is undoubtedly the great prison-house of death, into which approximately

twenty thousand millions already have gone. All these are to come forth. But the Scriptures declare that they will not all come forth at once, but "every man in his own order." Only the Church will be in the First Resurrection.

During the Millennium the awakening from the sleep of death, the prison-house, will come about by Divine Power, of course, but we believe in answer to prayer. Each family circle, as it can prepare for another and another member, will be glad to do so, and will make request for his return. Thus the race will come out of the "prison-house" in reverse order to that in which they entered, and will be acquainted with, identified by, and prepared for by their friends, their relatives.

While the blessing of the Lord will provide an abundance for all, nevertheless we may safely assume that the provision will be in the hands of their fellows. It will be the "sheep" that will be especially interested in, praying for and preparing for, those who are in the great prison-house of death. And by so engaging their time and energy these "sheep" will be manifesting a purpose, a will, in harmony with that of the Creator. God has willed that all who are in their graves shall come forth at the command of Jesus (John 5:28,29), and those in sympathy with God and Christ will be co-laborers with God in accomplishing the work for which Christ died. Any not interested in that work will be lacking in God's Spirit; and this is exactly what is charged against the goat-class.

R5532 : page 268

He who sits upon the Throne, having redeemed the world of mankind and having provided for the resurrection of all these redeemed ones, counts them as in a certain sense representing Himself--as He says in the parable: "I was an hungered, and ye fed Me; I was sick and in prison, and ye visited Me," ministered unto Me and helped Me.

Likewise the reproof to the goat-class: to these He said, You were not interested in the things of God. Your interest was merely personal, a selfish one. You have enjoyed the blessings of these glorious thousand years, and that is all that God has provided for you. You are not of the kind to whom He is pleased to grant everlasting life. You will therefore, die. You have more or less of the selfish spirit, which is the spirit of Satan, and as God's provision for all who will not be in fellowship with Him in spirit is destruction, this is to be your portion --the Second Death.

The eternal fire is the fire of God's jealousy or anger, which burns against and destroys everything antagonistic to His righteousness. (Zephaniah 1:18; 3:8.) It is, of course, merely a figurative expression representing complete destruction.

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"LET NO ONE TAKE THY CROWN"

--SEPTEMBER 27.--QUARTERLY REVIEW.--

"I come quickly. Hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown."--Revelation 3:11.

THE TEXT of today's Study is a prophecy by Jesus Himself. Picturing the seven stages of His Church, the Master used these words in addressing one of them. There is, nevertheless, an appropriateness in all of the Lord's counsel at any time. So we now, as well as those who were particularly addressed, may find instruction in our text.

It teaches, in harmony with the entire Bible, that there can be no remedy for the reign of Sin and Death, except that which God has provided, to be applied at the Second Coming of the Redeemer, when He will set up His Kingdom. Meantime, the delay in the fulfilment of our prayer, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven," does not indicate any carelessness on the part of the Father or of the Redeemer in respect to the world and its terrible reign of Sin and Death. It does, however, indicate great composure on God's part and on the part of the Master. It indicates that the Plan of God is working, and that it will ultimately bring a blessing to the whole world, the blessing which God has promised since the days

of Abraham--the blessing of all the families of the earth.

God has from the beginning foreseen how the six great Days of the reign of Sin and Death could be wisely permitted, in view of the power to be exercised by Messiah's Kingdom. Messiah will be quite competent, backed by Power Divine, to cope with sin, sorrow, pain, death--everything that is now troubling humanity. The time appointed of the Father, a thousand years, will be abundantly long. And when the Church shall have been selected from the world as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife and Joint-heir in His Kingdom, everything will be ready for the blessed work of restitution, restoration, resurrection, regeneration of mankind--to bring the willing and obedient back to the image and likeness of the Creator, lost through Adam's sin and gained through the willing obedience of Christ, even unto death--even the ignominious death of the cross.

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE CHURCH

Our text addresses not the world, not the nominal Church--but the true Church. The true Church, having

turned away from sin, having accepted Christ, having given their hearts to God, through Christ having been accepted of the Father and begotten of the Holy Spirit, are children of God; and, as the Apostle says, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" our Lord. (Romans 8:17.) A crown of glory is set apart for each son thus received of the Father, and the name of each is recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life.

So far as God is concerned, the whole matter is settled. But so far as the Church is concerned, it still remains for them to fulfil their Covenant. Having presented their bodies a living sacrifice to God, acceptable through Christ, they are to continue in that attitude--day by day gladly presenting their bodies, willing to endure, to suffer, to be anything and everything that God would be pleased to have them be. All who do this continue to grow in character-likeness to the Lord Jesus; and all such will thereby make their calling and election sure.

But should any of these neglect this Covenant of Sacrifice, and through fear of death be subject to bondage either to sin or to sectarian errors, or in any other manner fail to be responsive and loyal to their Covenant, they will thereby fail to maintain their election and make it sure. After a time of testing they will be relegated to a secondary place; they will be no longer counted part of the Royal Priesthood, even though they might still maintain their standing as Levites, servants of the Priests.

This is the thought of the text; namely, Be of good courage. It will not be long until I will come to receive you to Myself. Let the thought of the Kingdom and of the Divine blessing connected with it cheer, strengthen, comfort you, and make you strong to do God's will faithfully, nobly, courageously, loyally. "Hold fast that which thou hast." Do not let slip from you the blessed relationship which was entered into, which was established for you by Me, your Master, when I made you acceptable on the basis of your Covenant to be dead with Me, to suffer with Me, to give up all earthly ambitions and to strive daily for the great prize which I set before you--a joint-heirship in My Kingdom.

The crown is yours now, by virtue of the arrangement which I have made with you as your Advocate, and by virtue of the Covenant of Sacrifice which you have made with Me. Hold fast your crown! Do not allow it to pass to another. If any one of you is unfaithful, God will not permit you to have a share in that Kingdom, but will enroll another name than yours, will apportion another name instead of yours as a new Covenanter.

THE NUMBER OF THE ELECT

This Scripture, with others, shows us definitely that the Church is to be composed of a definite, fixed number --not one more, not one less. This is also illustrated in the body of the Jewish high priest. The head of the priest represented Jesus; the body of the priest represented

the Church. As the Apostle says, "Now are ye the Body of Christ, and members in particular." "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." "God hath set the members every one of them in the Body, as it hath pleased Him." "There are many members, but one Body."--1 Corinthians 12:27,12,18,20.

According to the Law, no one could serve in the office of high priest unless he had the full number of members--fingers, toes, etc. (Leviticus 21:17-21.) No one could serve who had a superfluous member--an extra finger, an extra toe. Thus the Lord indicated the completeness of the antitypical Priesthood, The Christ.

In Revelation, Chapter 7, we have a picture of the Church, the antitypical Royal Priesthood. Then following that picture we have one of the antitype of the Levite class. The first shows a definite number, one hundred and forty-four thousand--twelve thousand for each of the tribes of Israel. Thus God indicates that He is following out a definite purpose. Israel was first invited to be this Royal Priesthood. (Exodus 19:5,6.) At Pentecost a few out of the different tribes responded, and became the nucleus, or earliest members, of the Church. Then the door of opportunity was opened to the Gentiles; and all coming in are assigned to places in the twelve tribes to fill up the vacancies. This the Apostle Paul pictures in Romans 11--the wild olive branches being grafted into the olive tree to take the places of the branches broken off because of unbelief.

Those loyal to the Lord, yet not sufficiently loyal to be of the Bride class, after having been tested as to their loyalty and proven worthy, will constitute a Great Company,

R5533 : page 269

an innumerable company, a company whose number no man knows--a company whose number is not foreordained. The discipline through which these will be put is pictorially stated. They will come through great tribulation, and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. They must in the end be faithful; else they will not have any part or lot with Christ in His work.

But since this testing needed to come upon them as a judgment, because they did not voluntarily and full-souledly keep their Covenant of Sacrifice, therefore they cannot be of the elect Body of Christ. They will miss the Throne. They miss the glorious crown of the Divine nature--immortality. But they receive palm branches, signifying victory, and we have the assurance that they will be permitted to serve God in and through His Temple, the Church, which is the Body of Christ.

R5532 : page 269

NO CROSS, NO CROWN

"THE purple grape must be crushed
To make the sweet, red wine,
And furnace fires must fiercely burn
The drossy gold to refine;
The wheel must cruelly grind,
Else where the jewel's light?
And the steel submit to the polishing,
Or how would the sword grow bright?

"How then, my soul, wilt thou
The Spirit's fruits possess,
Except thou lovingly yield thyself
To the Hand that wounds to bless?
Then patiently let the fire
Consume all earthly dross--
Thou canst not hope to wear the Crown,
If thou refuse the Cross!"

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R5533 : page 270

GOD'S MUCH DIVERSIFIED WISDOM AND MERCY

"For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world,
what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?
For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if
the root be holy, so are the branches."--Romans 11:15,16.

THE JEWISH nation was reconciled to God
in a typical way, and thus became His
peculiar people. All His promises belonged
to them--no such promises were made to
the Gentiles. The relationship of the Jews
to God was through their Covenant. But
after eighteen hundred and forty-five years
of special favor, their rejection of Messiah
demonstrated their unworthiness of a continuance
of their special privileges. In the
time of testing they were found wanting, and were given
over to blindness and disruption until their "double"--
eighteen hundred and forty-five years of disfavor--should
be accomplished.

All, however, were not thus rejected from favor. A
faithful remnant were gathered into the Gospel Fold,
while the remainder were "scattered and peeled." This
faithful remnant were the First-fruits class of the Church
of Christ. God then sent His Message out to the whole
world. Romans, Greeks, British, French, Germans,
Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, etc.--all nations--have had
the same opportunity. This does not mean that all individuals
of all nations have been given this opportunity;
but that the Lord has selected here and there one of

suitable character, who gladly responded to the Message --those who, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, had the hearing ear. God gave to these the Message of reconciliation, and sent them forth to bear the Glad Tidings to others of the same class.

All who believed that Message were reconciled to God through the death of His Son. They have been a company of sacrificers, gladly laying down their lives as followers in the Master's steps. The Message of this great salvation has gone forth through all the years of this present Age, and some from every nation have responded and come into the Body of Christ. This could not have been if the Jews had not proven unfaithful as a nation and been turned aside from favor. The Gentiles have known this. They saw that the favor of God, the blessing of God, turned to them at the same time that it was withdrawn from the Jews.

"LIFE FROM THE DEAD"

The Natural Israelites, even after their rejection from favor as a people, had still an opportunity as individuals of coming into Christ, but no special favor as a nation. Indeed, their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, and their bitter prejudice and blindness have acted as a great gulf to separate them as a people from the Gospel Message; and but very few of them have ever accepted God's Message in Christ. As the Apostle here declares, their blindness as a nation is not to be removed until "the fulness of the Gentiles [to complete the Gospel Church] be come in." This time is now about here; the Gospel Church is about complete.

Do we remember how the restoration of Natural Israel is to be accomplished? Yes. The Scriptures declare that it is to be brought about through the New Covenant--"This is My Covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." It will be at the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom; Messiah is then to inaugurate this Covenant. What will this mean to the Jews? It will mean that their "double" is fulfilled, that "their appointed time is accomplished, that their iniquity is pardoned." [See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 2, Study 7.] It will mean their resurrection from the dead --both nationally and individually, both symbolically and literally. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world [in the receiving of the Gentile 'wild olive branches' into the 'olive tree,' from which the majority of the Jews were broken off], what shall the receiving [back] of them be, but life from the dead?" --Romans 11:15.

Here we have another Scriptural teaching of the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead. The promises are to be fulfilled which were made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, the Prophets and others. Though God cast the nation off for a time, He will regather them, according to His promise, when their period of chastisement

shall be ended--their "seven times." [See Vol. 2, Study 4.] Extending the thought, we see that the Promise of God to Abraham of the blessing of all the nations and kindreds and families of the earth through his Seed--the Heavenly and the earthly, "the stars of Heaven" class and "the sands upon the seashore" class--must yet be fulfilled. (Genesis 22:15-18.) The fulfilment of this Promise will necessitate the awakening of the entire human race from the tomb. Thus the munificence of God's wonderful provision for His human creatures is soon to be manifested to angels and men--to the living and the dead--to all the human family.

FIRST-FRUIT AND AFTER-FRUIT--ALL HOLY

In verse 16 the Apostle is showing that as the First-fruit of this great "olive tree" growing out of the root of the Abrahamic Covenant is holy, so is the entire fruitage. Although this Promise to Abraham was given directly to his earthly seed, nevertheless God, who knew the end from the beginning, knew that the First-fruit of this Promise would be Abraham's spiritual Seed--the Christ, Head and Body. And yet this breaking off of many of the natural branches, and the grafting in of "wild olive branches" to take their place, which has been going on during this Gospel Age, was not the limit of God's great Plan. It was His purpose to have a holy Seed. Abraham was first tested, and all who were to constitute this Seed were to be likewise tested; but these were to be used as agents in the hands of Jehovah for the carrying out of His Plan of Salvation.

As this First-fruit class is holy, the Apostle declares, "the lump is also holy." The word lump here would better be translated mass, for he is speaking of people. The root is holy--the Covenant of Jehovah, confirmed by His oath to Abraham. So all who become joined to this root, and receive their life and their privileges and blessings from it, will also be holy.

Abraham typically represented Jehovah God; Isaac represented the Son, our Lord Jesus; and Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, represented the Bride of Christ, the members of His Body. All these together--Father, Son and Bride--will bring forth a holy, earthly Israel. This will eventually include all mankind who shall come under the terms of the New Covenant. So Israel restored, and the entire world--all of the race of Adam who will return to harmony with God--will constitute the "holy lump," or mass--the after-fruit.

Looking at the deep workings of God's Plan thus, in the light of what He tells us is future, as well as of what is past, how wonderful it is! Oh, the rich depths of God's wisdom and knowledge! How useless for us to try to discover His dealings except as He is pleased to reveal His plans to us. His doings are all mysteries to us except as we are enlightened by His Spirit. Who knew this gracious Plan, so much beyond human conception?

Who helped the Lord to arrange such a Plan,
think you? This is not human wisdom. God only could

R5533 : page 271

be its Author. A Jew would never have planned to
graft in Gentiles to share the chief blessings of the Promise.
A Gentile never would have arranged the original
stock and branches Jewish and himself a favored graft.
No, the Plan is clearly of God, and well illustrates both
His goodness and His just severity. Of Him is all the
Plan; through His power it is all brought to pass, and to
Him be the glory forever.

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R5533 : page 271

INTERESTING LETTERS

LIGHT IN "DARKEST AFRICA"

DEAR BROTHER:--

The Harvest work is growing stronger than in past days.
Our friends who were much against the Truth are now attending
privately, and we are surely showing them the way
of our Lord Jesus through His Holy Scriptures, and many
are trusting in the Truth. I can say that they have some
reason for believing the Truth now.

Surely we are living in the Time of the End, according
to the Scriptures. We are seeing the clergy-people turning the
Word of God into fables. They think they can stop the
Christian people from sinning--as they call it--by whipping
and by putting them in prison and by making them pay so

R5534 : page 271

much money. Can this stop the people sinning? No; not
at all! If these were the Great Preacher's words and the
words of our Heavenly Father, and His punishment against
the wicked, they would surely stop the people from sinning.

But we read in the Bible that the Deliverer shall come,
and the Kingdom of God shall come, and all nations shall
know the Way of our God; but the wicked will He destroy.
Also we learn from our Master's lips the saying, "Learn of
Me." People may remember that our Lord found the people
of Israel doing wrong against the Word of God, and they
were proud. But we never see a single line in the Bible saying
that He took even one of the Jews to the Roman Governor,
to be put in prison, etc.

All these things make us to be strong in faith that the
Harvest Message is true. "Though it tarry, it will come."
We had not believed it for a certain time, but when we believed
we consecrated ourselves unto death.

I can only let you know how we are doing. We hold meetings
twice a month, beginning on Friday and lasting over

Sunday. Friday, Bible Study; Saturday, discussion; Sunday, public meeting. Another week, the meeting on Friday is Question meeting; praise and testimony meeting on Saturday, and public meeting on Sunday. The number in attendance on Sunday, when we have general meeting, is 1,040, 385, 1,000, etc.; private meetings 36 to 40. But when we call all Churches to one place, hundreds of brethren are present!

We thank God for His blessings which He has bestowed upon us. Furthermore, we thank Him for showing us His secret and that He gives us Wisdom to understand His Holy Scriptures. How glad we are to see these things being fulfilled before our eyes! In Nyassaland we see many things which have been preached in our Churches, and what we are learning in the Volumes and WATCH TOWER--all these things are now being fulfilled. How glad we are to see that God has given us wisdom in preaching! How glad we are to see that our Lord is in the midst of us, leading us into His marvelous light! How glad we are that we "which in past times were not a people, are now the people of God"! And how glad we are to be dead to fleshly lusts, but to be alive to spiritual things! May God's blessing rest upon you!

Your younger brother in the Service,
H. LIMON ACHIRWA.--Africa.

THE STRENGTHENING CORD

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Greetings in the Lord! I feel constrained to write you concerning my recent experiences in the Colporteur work, which are unusual. Several days ago I canvassed a lady who is a trance-medium. She did not order the books. Presently I called on another, who bought the Spiritualism book. Still another I called upon in the same block, not knowing in either case that they were Spiritualists.

This one began by telling me she is preparing herself to be a writing and talking medium, and how, at times, "the forces" torment her day and night until she uses strong will-power to disperse them, saying, "Leave me now; I must have rest."

Asking the Lord's assistance, I proceeded to point out from Scripture the origin of these evil spirits--the fallen angels. Strange to say, she accepted it all very readily and asked questions re the same so eagerly! At this juncture peculiar noises were heard about the room; rappings, cracklings and faint chucklings. She noticed my nervousness and said in an assuring tone, "There they are now! It's the spirits, because you are talking about them." No doubt they were much displeased because of fear that she would get her eyes opened. Another medium now entered the room and I left.

How thankful to the Lord I am that He through you has provided the "strengthening cord"--the Vow! As the consummation draws nearer we realize how necessary was this provision.

Much interest is now being aroused among the Natural Israelites in this city through distribution of Jewish Hopes

and Restoration Prospects. Every family took one. They speak often of having read of Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn, in their Jewish papers. "He tells us of the restoration. Oh, we are so glad 'twill be soon!"

A dear brother bearing your name (Russell), although but three weeks reading the "Helping Hands," is rejoicing in the truths therein. He gives evidence of having made a consecration and is already showing his faith by his works, by helping the Lord's people. He expects soon to see the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION in Boston. The Photo-Drama Scenario is stimulating interest to read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES. This brother desired me to tell you of his appreciation of the Truth.

Even where few books are placed it gives the Colporteurs great joy to be able to reach even one who is hungering for the Bread of Truth.

I wish to testify to the blessings the Lord in His goodness is sending me--especially through THE WATCH TOWER articles. The March 15th--"Are Ye Able?"--was so strengthening for the "Feet-members"!

Praying that the Lord's richest blessings rest upon you to the very end,

Yours by His grace,

B. HAYNES.

page 271

HIS LIGHT INCREASING

DEARLY BELOVED PASTOR AND BROTHER:--

During a visit to the Washington Ecclesia last March it was my privilege to conduct a Question meeting in which, among others, some questions on the date of the end of the Harvest, of the Times of the Gentiles and of the deliverance of the Church were propounded to me and answered. In my answers I expressed my conviction that these three events would occur this fall. On the point of the deliverance of the Church I now consider my answer wrong.

It seems that notes were made on these answers and are being widely circulated among the brethren. I have not seen these notes, nor do I know how nearly they reproduce my answers. I am in receipt of many questions as to whether I still hold the thought that the Church leaves the world this fall. I have reason to believe that the Adversary is using this statement on the deliverance of the Church this fall, in these notes, to hold back some of the brethren from increasing light, which as "meat in due season," the Lord is pleased to give us through His appointed channel.

I deeply regret having made the statement, and the influence it is having; and therefore I desire to counteract its mischief. While I have the full assurance of faith that this fall is the end of the Harvest and of the Times of the Gentiles, I am happy to say, on the basis of Psalm 46; Leviticus 16:20-24; Matthew 20:8-16; and, in view of Elijah's activities subsequent to his arrival at Mount Horeb until he left this earth, that I now have the assurance of faith the Church is to remain on earth for awhile after October, 1914.

I shall be very thankful if you will, D. V., kindly publish

this letter in THE TOWER in order to counteract as far as possible any mischief that Satan may attempt through the above mentioned statement in the notes in question. As a teacher in the Church I desire to subject all my utterances to "The good Word of God" as its increasing Light, as "meat in due season," dawns on my mind and heart; and by such increasing light modify previous imperfect understandings of things.

Dear Brother, it gives me great pleasure indeed to see "the good Word of God," as due to the Household, eye to eye with you. Daily I thank our dear Father and Elder Brother for the privilege of being a co-laborer and co-sufferer with you in the best of bonds. The Lord's continued blessing rest upon you and His Israel everywhere, whom it is my heart's pleasure to help and bless, but not hinder and injure! With much Christian love, in which Sister Johnson joins, I remain

Your brother and fellow-servant, PAUL S. L. JOHNSON.

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page 273

VOL. XXXV SEPTEMBER 15 No. 18
A. D. 1914--A. M. 6042

CONTENTS

"Thy Judgments Are a Mighty Deep".....	275
Why God Permits the Present Reign of Sin.....	275
God's Glorious Character Revealed.....	277
The Anointed Only Are Commissioned to Preach.....	277
The "Body" of Christ No Part of the Ransom.....	277
The Blessing of the "Cup of Salvation".....	279
Deeper Significance to Spiritual Israel.....	280
The Christian's Tower of Strength.....	282
"That Wicked One Toucheth Him Not".....	282
Mary's Sweet Perfume.....	283
The Attitude of the Religious Teachers.....	283
A Suggestion Worth Consideration.....	284
Two Passover Memorials.....	284
The Crisis in Judas' Life.....	285
The Signification of the Memorial.....	285
Interesting Letters.....	286
A Reply by the Editor.....	286
Berean Bible Studies, Vol. II.....	287

page 274

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"THY JUDGMENTS ARE A MIGHTY DEEP!"

"The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."--1 CORINTHIANS 1:25.

THE Plan which God has adopted for dealing with sin and with sinners seems to the worldly mind, to worldly wisdom, to be a very foolish, a very unwise plan. The declarations of the Bible along this line do not appeal to such minds as reasonable. First of all, God created man perfect. Then He placed him under conditions where he was tempted and fell into sin. God then pronounced upon him a sentence of death, as He had forewarned him would be the result of disobedience. After thus sentencing man, Jehovah Himself provided for a release from that death penalty by furnishing a Redeemer for the sinner at great cost. When He wished to proclaim to the world His provision for their salvation from the curse, He sent forth preachers chosen from the race of sinners to tell the good tidings.

For nearly two thousand years these preachers have used their best efforts. As some of them would die, others would take their places. But with all the preaching that has been done only a very few have believed the Message or given an attentive ear. Often have these imperfect messengers grown weary and faint. They have gone to the Lord with burdened hearts, telling Him of the meager results that attended their labors. But the Lord has answered, "Continue to give forth the words which I have delivered to you; this is My will; it is just what I wish you to do." So they have toiled on, leaving the results with God.

But the world has shaken the unbelieving head. To them the proclaiming of such a Message has seemed foolish, a waste of valuable time, an evidence of unsoundness of mind. Few have believed that it is of God--even if a God of Love existed at all. Yet, as the Apostle tells us, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Corinthians 1:21.) He chose this method, which men denominate foolishness, to select a special class for a very special purpose, in connection with His great Plan. Although from the human standpoint this appears a very small and weak beginning, as if God's work is almost a failure--if He purposes to save and uplift the world--yet when the Plan of God shall have been brought to its glorious consummation, it will be seen by all to have been most wise, powerful and effective. No more shall it be

"The unbeliever's jest, the heathen's scorn."

God is not now choosing the great ones of earth, but chiefly the mean things, the humble and obscure, "that no flesh shall glory in His presence." He is choosing these as instruments to bless the remainder of the world.

LIFE A GREAT BOON EVEN NOW

The question has been asked: How is the Love of God to be seen from the standpoint of a deliberate arrangement beforehand which, in its outworking, has involved so vast an amount of sin, suffering and death? In thinking of this question, one should first of all rid himself wholly of the erroneous thought that sin, suffering and dying are only preludes to an eternity of woe. Then we are to remember that God is not in any way our debtor. We are His debtors, even for our existence; He owes the race nothing.

Suppose that we could disabuse all minds of the idea of eternal torture or of a purgatory of suffering after death, and should then say to them, Consider, now: Would you prefer to live on for a few years more, or would you rather die at once? Or, suppose we put it this

R5535 : page 275

way: Are you glad that you have an existence, or would you rather that you had never been born? We believe that the great majority would reply that they desire to live, that they prefer to live as long as possible. They do not wish to die, either today or tomorrow or next year; indeed they would never die if they could help it!

Those who feel that they would be glad to die, or who wish that they had never been born, are those who have had more than ordinarily evil and unhappy experiences; or else they are unbalanced in mind. Many have not so much money as they would like, not so pleasant surroundings and conditions as some have and as they would wish to have. Still life is sweet; and they hold on to it with as firm a grip as possible. Love of life is inherent in man, and has survived even the sorrowful experiences consequent on the fall.

WHY GOD PERMITS THE PRESENT REIGN OF SIN

But why does God permit things to be as they are? This has ever been one of the perplexing problems to the minds of those who have still sufficient faith to believe in the existence of a Supreme Creator. We do not know that we can make the matter any clearer or state it any more plainly than we have stated it in *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, Volume I., in the chapter on "Why Evil Was Permitted." Putting ourselves in God's place we are able to see that He must create man either without moral faculties, like the lower animals, or else with mental and moral faculties capable of appreciating the standards of right and wrong, of appreciating his Creator, with power

to reason and to choose between good and evil--between obedience and disobedience to that Creator.

Having previously brought into existence the brute creation, God wished to create a nobler order of beings, creatures in His own image and likeness, on the earthly

R5535 : page 276

plane of life. He purposed to have a race of beings who were perfect like the angels, able to appreciate the same moral standards, the same principles of righteousness. The question might be asked: How could God so create these beings that they would not be in danger of sometime falling into sin? Evidently it was not God's purpose so to create them. He desired that they should possess the quality of free moral agency, the power to exercise their own wills for either righteousness or unrighteousness.

At the time of the creation of man, Lucifer, Son of the Morning, began to cherish ambitious designs, disloyal to his Maker. He realized that a race on a lower plane of existence than himself might be induced to choose a course at variance with the expressed will of God--their Creator. Before man's creation God had foreseen that Lucifer would deflect from the path of obedience, would become a rebel against His righteous Government, a great Adversary, and that as the result evil would break forth later in His Empire. He foresaw that through the influence of the rebellious Lucifer (thenceforth Satan--adversary, accuser, hater) man would become disobedient and fall from the condition of perfection in which he would be created.

Knowing this, and doing man no injustice, but creating him with full ability to resist temptation, God so arranged and timed the creation of man that he would be an object of attack by Satan, who would take advantage of the inexperience of Father Adam and Mother Eve and seek to capture the entire race of man. In other words, God purposed to permit this test to come to man, and knowing that Adam would fail in the testing and thus incur the penalty of death, He designed to make the experience of the race an object lesson to all His created intelligences, and at the same time to so overrule the matter that the human family would themselves eventually be delivered from the evil results of the fall and be greatly blessed, if they would profit by the lessons learned in their bitter experiences with sin, and would come back into harmony with righteousness.

TIME AN IMPORTANT FEATURE

God's infinite Wisdom could not approve any as worthy of everlasting life who would not prove themselves to be in full accord with His Divine Law. The nature of sin is to propagate itself and to produce misery and degradation. With this knowledge God arranged in advance to let man have his own way. He foreknew that intelligent

beings with liberty of choice and of will would eventually, if untaught and unrestricted, fall into sin, even though a penalty was attached to disobedience. He chose not to restrain Lucifer.

The Plan of God is so comprehensive that it cannot be viewed and judged from the standpoint of a few years --not even of a thousand years or six thousand years. It must be viewed from the standpoint of eternity. It was arranged, not for the well-being of creatures who would live for a few years or a few centuries, but for those who would live throughout eternal ages. His Plan must, therefore, be laid so broadly as to include all time and all beings created in His likeness, for His glory and their own eternal good.

We are not to suppose that Jehovah weeps in anguish because mankind are suffering and dying. He is a God of infinite love and sympathy; but from the beginning He knew that man would fall, and that He Himself could overrule the entire matter for the ultimate blessing and instruction of men and angels--all His created intelligences; and He purposed so to do. We ourselves know that sin and death with all their direful effects have prevailed in the world for six thousand years. We also know that our God is at the helm, and that all things will be made to work out good in the end. We think of the flood as a terrible overthrow, because so many lives were lost. Yet the calamity would have been far greater if one half had been left to mourn for the others. It is claimed that men do not suffer very much when drowning --that death by this means is comparatively easy.

Six thousand years of sin, sorrow and death seem a long while for humanity to suffer. Yet the majority of the race have not lived beyond the age of twenty years. Perhaps one-half have not lived to the age of five. Very few have reached the age of one hundred years. We all have seasons of comparative comfort, blessing and enjoyment; even under present conditions, God has been very merciful. And from the viewpoint of the glorious future, with its marvelous opportunities of blessing, its hope of eternal life for man, and its great lessons learned for all eternity by all of God's intelligent creatures, the reign of Sin and Death presents an altogether different aspect from what could otherwise be had.

In permitting the long reign of Sin and its train of evils, God has been showing forth the principles of His Government, that all may clearly discern in time what are the inevitable results of disobedience to their great Creator. We are sure that Adam and Eve were glad that God did not instantly carry out the sentence of death pronounced against them. We are sure that they were glad to be permitted to continue their existence for many years, even after they had been driven out of the Garden of Eden; and we believe that they had many experiences of more or less happiness, in spite of the tears, the pain and the sorrows that fell to their lot.

So when we view the entire history of the race of

Adam, and perceive that all the experiences with sin, suffering and death are to be caused to outwork God's glorious purposes for the world, and are designed to prove a lasting lesson to all His intelligent creatures who now exist or ever will exist, we can see why He has permitted the reign of evil which to man has seemed so long. When we see, too, that God is now choosing a very select class, of very humble and obedient ones, to be used as agencies under His Only Begotten Son to recover and uplift to perfection and life everlasting all the human race who will accept the gracious provisions, we can understand why He has been pleased to call this class through the "foolishness of preaching," by very imperfect instruments. Thus He has manifested the humble ones, who will receive His Message by any means which He is pleased to use, and who are glad to forsake sin and serve Him.

A SAVIOR AND A GREAT ONE

God might have said, I will lift My curse from mankind and let them have another trial for life--an individual trial. But even if this had been in harmony with God's Justice, it would not have sufficed alone. Mankind have long been floundering in the mire of sin. They were powerless to profit from any new trial granted them that would not include a Redeemer, a Savior, who was strong, not only to bring about the abrogation of the death sentence by a payment of their penalty, but also to deliver them from all the bonds of Sin and Death in their members. He must be a Savior having power to bind the great Adversary who has so long held the race of man in slavery and blindness. He must heal their wounds, open their blinded eyes and their deafened ears, and lift them up, up, into the light and liberty of the sons of God. Truly, man needs a mighty Savior; and such, praise God, has been provided in His beloved Son!

As we trace the various steps of the marvelous Plan of the Ages, we perceive that to all who shall gain eternal

R5535 : page 277

life, on whatever plane of being, the path of humility is the path to glory. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." None will be granted the inestimable blessing of life everlasting who are not thoroughly proven and found worthy under testing, who do not cheerfully humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. This principle applies to both human and spirit beings. Only those who gladly obey God, out of love for Him and for His righteous laws, will be permitted to live beyond the Harvest time of the Millennial Age. All others shall utterly perish.

GOD'S GLORIOUS CHARACTER REVEALED

Then the holy in every sphere of life, in every part of

the mighty Universe of God, shall ascribe glory, honor and praise to the Almighty Creator and to His glorious

R5536 : page 277

Son throughout the ages of eternity. All will then see and acknowledge how marvelous was Jehovah's Plan of Redemption, how far beyond the power of fallen man to fathom. The majesty and glory of the Divine Character will stand revealed--His unswerving Justice combined with infinite compassion, His glorious Wisdom, His marvelous Love, His mighty Power. Then all will bow before Him and adore!

"When all Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise!"

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R5536 : page 277

THE ANOINTED ONLY ARE COMMISSIONED TO PREACH

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek: He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the Day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."-- ISAIAH 61:1-3.

WHEN the Prophet Isaiah uttered these words he spoke by the power of the Holy Spirit. As the Apostle Peter tells us, "Holy men of old spake as they were moved of the Holy Spirit." Further, he says, "Of which salvation the Prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace which should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; unto whom it was revealed, That not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel, with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven."--2 Peter 1:21; 1 Peter 1:10-12.

In our text the word anointed is used in the sense of ordination. The high priests of Israel were successively

anointed, or ordained, of God, the anointing oil representing the Holy Spirit. Their kings were anointed to reign over the typical kingdom of God, the oil here also representing the Holy Spirit. And so Christ, the great High Priest and King, was ordained of God by the anointing of the Spirit. It was not an anointing of men or by men.

In our Lord's case we know exactly when this prophecy was fulfilled. It was when He came to John at Jordan to be baptized, and there presented Himself in sacrifice to God. The Divine acceptance of this sacrifice was manifested by the impartation of the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist saw the Spirit as a dove descending upon the Lord, the sign given to John, but seen by no one else. Jesus recognized that He had received a special anointing and unction from the Father--and others from that time perceived it. We are not to suppose that Jesus performed miracles before He was anointed, but this does not signify that He did not speak kind words and do kind acts before that time; for as a perfect man He possessed the Spirit of God in the full measure that a man in the image of God would possess it.

The fact that our Lord Jesus waited until He was thirty years of age before making His special consecration and receiving His ordination and commission to preach does not mean that His followers should wait until they are thirty before they begin to preach. It was necessary that Jesus should conform Himself to the requirements of the Law of Moses, given by God to the Jews; for Jesus as a man was a Jew, born under the Law and subject, therefore, to its every feature. Full manhood under the Law was not attained until the age of thirty. Our Lord came to give His life as a substitute for the forfeited life of Adam. Adam was a complete, perfect man, and our Lord must attain maturity as a perfect man before He could be a perfect substitute, a corresponding price.

THE "BODY" OF CHRIST NO PART OF THE RANSOM

With the disciples of the Lord Jesus during this Gospel Age, the matter is quite different. Consecration is appropriate to whoever has the maturity of mind to realize clearly what he is doing--to realize the merit of Jesus' death and the significance of becoming a joint-sacrificer with Him. The giving of the Ransom is not shared by the followers of Christ. That was His work alone. But His disciples are permitted of God, in the opulence of His favor, to be counted in with Jesus as a part of the Sin-Offering for the world, after His merit has been imputed to them and they have become members of His Body, which gives to their offering a virtue which it could not otherwise possess. His merit is all-sufficient, and it is His merit that purchases the world, through His Body, the Church.

The anointing that was upon Christ Jesus continued with Him throughout His earthly ministry--the fulness, or completeness, of God's favor rested upon His every

word and act. God was manifest in His flesh; for He was the perfect human representation of all the qualities of Jehovah's glorious character. This was demonstrated in His resurrection from the dead after His sacrifice had been finished. Otherwise His work of sacrifice would have been a failure and He would have remained in the congregation of the dead, and there would have been no benefit accruing to mankind from His death. Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit and anointed at His baptism, and was born a completed Spirit Being of the very highest rank at His resurrection. No other being had ever been created on this plane of life. Hitherto Jehovah alone had possessed Divine, incorruptible life.

OUR TEXT APPLIES TO THE ENTIRE CHRIST

We might have inferred without any direct statement that the words of the Prophet in our text apply to our Lord Jesus, but no doubt is left in our minds when we find that He Himself quoted these words in His sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth, where He was brought up. He there stood up and read a part of this prophecy aloud. Then closing the Book He said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:16-21.) He pointed

R5536 : page 278

out that He was the one referred to by the Prophet. And we see the appropriateness of this application in every way.

But while the prophecy was primarily fulfilled in Jesus, and applied especially to Him, we understand that it applies also to the members of Christ. These by becoming His Body, thus became a part of Himself. It is not because of any merit of their own.

This anointing that is on the Church comes to us through Christ, flowing down from the Head over all the Body members, as shown in the type of the high priest of Israel, and as declared by the Psalmist. (Psalm 133:2.) The Lord Jesus is our great Advocate with the Father, and in Him alone have we any standing before God. We are thus received of the Father as spirit-begotten sons, even as was our Head. We are begotten of the Spirit, as was He.

Our vital union with our Lord as members of His Body is also further shown by the Prophet Isaiah. Read carefully the 49th chapter, vs. 7-9, and their interpretation by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:1,2. This same Apostle further declares, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." Again, "The cup for which we bless God, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the participation of the Body of Christ? For we, the many, are one loaf and one Body." "Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular."--1 Corinthians 12:12; 10:16,17; 12:27.

Again, the Apostle Paul declares of the Church, "Whereunto He [God] called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." How the deep sayings of the Savior become luminous in the light shed upon them by the Apostles after their anointing of the Spirit! How the Master fulfilled to them His promise made just before His crucifixion! He said, as we remember, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, it shall guide you into all Truth, for it shall not speak of itself; but whatsoever it shall hear, that shall it speak, and it will show you things to come." (John 16:12,13.) These were the deep things of God, which only the spirit-begotten, spirit-taught children of God can understand.

We are, if faithful, to be made like Him and share His exceeding glory. No wonder the Apostle exultingly declared, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him; but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."--1 Corinthians 2:10.

APPLICATION OF OUR TEXT NOW

The Apostle John says that "the anointing which we have received of Him abideth in us." Again, "Hereby we know that we dwell in Him [God] and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." The Apostle Peter declares that Jesus "having received of the Father the promise

R5537 : page 278

of the Holy Spirit [for the Church], hath shed forth this." (1 John 2:27; 4:13; Acts 2:33.) It is from the Father and by the Son. This corroborates St. Paul's statement that all things are of the Father, and all things are by the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6.) The Scriptures tell us that we were begotten and anointed of God.

The anointing of the Church is for a work yet future. The work of Christ and the Church will not be accomplished in this present Age. But God gives to those whom He has accepted opportunity to use in His service in the present life talents which He has entrusted to them. They are, as far as they are able, to bind up broken hearts and give "the oil of joy for mourning," and thus to help to allay the sufferings of others, especially of the Lord's Household, though they are to assist any as they have suitable opportunity. But their special work in blessing and comforting the world will be in the kingdom. All mankind will be brought back from the tomb and will have all the blessed assistances of Messiah's Reign. Everything evil will be uprooted, and everything good will be fostered and blessed.

While the anointed of God are on this side of the veil they are, as His ambassadors, to show forth His praises

by telling others of the coming Kingdom and the blessings then to be showered upon all, when the favors of the Lord shall be poured out upon all men. They are to tell that these blessings are both for those now living and for those who have gone down into the grave. God's great Plan for the world is much broader and grander than once we thought. It is worthy of such a God as ours! Then let us tell to all who have an ear to hear, that the Lord is now pouring out His Spirit upon His servants and handmaidens, and soon will pour it upon all flesh--all mankind.

We are instructed that this anointed class are to preach to "the meek." They are not to preach to the rebellious or the indifferent; these are to be dealt with by and by. The judgments of the Lord will forcibly break their hearts, and will effectively deal with all. The ambassadors of the Lord are to seek especially all those everywhere who manifest that they are feeling after the Lord, who are not satisfied with the things of the world, but who are longing for better, nobler things, who have and manifest a teachable disposition.

WHO MAY SPEAK IN THE LORD'S NAME

The text intimates that nobody is to speak in God's name except those who have been Divinely commissioned to do so. Others may tell the story so far as they have learned it, but they are not authorized to speak in the name of the Lord. We are inclined to think that such do more harm than good, mixing error with Truth; for those who do not understand the Message have not been commissioned of the Lord to be His ambassadors. With God, human ordination counts for nothing. In human ordination, each denomination qualifies its own ministers. But the ordained ministers of God are servants of God and not of error. They are servants of His Truth, not of the traditions of men.

What we have said as to speaking in the Lord's name does not mean that we are to carry the matter so far as to say that no one but those who see the real Plan of God should even sing a hymn. In fact, the children of God are not to endeavor to hinder any from declaring the Truth. Jesus gave a good illustration of this principle when His disciples told Him that they had found some who were doing a work in His name and that they had forbidden them, because they did not follow Him. The Lord replied, "Forbid them not." And so with us. We are not to interfere with any who are preaching the Gospel, even through strife, for they may do some good. Neither are we to endeavor to stop any who preach what they believe to be the Gospel. This is not our present commission, or any part of it. We are not as yet judges of the world; but we are to recognize the difference between such and those who are the true ambassadors, or ministers, of God.

God says of some who profess to be His mouthpieces, but whom He calls "wicked," "What hast thou to do to

declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My words behind thee?" (Psalm 50:16,17.) Why should any undertake to give out the Message of

R5537 : page 279

God when He has not recognized them by granting them the anointing of His Holy Spirit, when they have not been taught of Him, and are not doing His will? Let all others do whatever they like in co-operation with the Truth, but only those who have been ordained of God in this one way should preach the Gospel. All who have received the Divine commission should rejoice in their wonderful privilege of proclaiming the Good Tidings.

One of the features of our commission as ambassadors of the Lord is "to comfort all that mourn." The children of God, who have learned the true Source of comfort, are the only ones properly qualified to be real comforters, in the Scriptural sense. These have had their own hearts bound up and healed by the great Physician, and hence they know where to direct longing hearts who need the balm which only God can give. As the Apostle says: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Corinthians 1:3,4.) So then, whether while still in the flesh or after we have come into our inheritance beyond the veil, we are to be comforters, to lift up those who are oppressed with sorrow and care, to bring to them "the oil of joy," the Message of grace.

We are to be comforters at this particular time of "them that mourn in Zion." This is a work that the saints of today, who have been enlightened and blessed by the Message of Present Truth, are eminently qualified to do. Many of us were mourners in Zion before this refreshing Message came to us, mourning because of the confusion and worldliness and dearth that prevailed in the nominal systems wherein we were bound. But now we are free, and no more are "our harps hung upon the willows of Babylon." They are attuned to the harmonies of Heaven, and we can now sing with the spirit and with the understanding the glorious "Song of Moses and the Lamb." So let us be zealous in carrying this glad news to all the mourners in Zion not yet delivered, that they may join with us in this glad song.

The entire Message as given in our text is now due to be proclaimed. We remember that on the occasion when our Lord read from the prophecy in the synagogue, He omitted the words, "and the Day of Vengeance of our God." That part of the prophecy was not due to be proclaimed; and Jesus could not have said of these words, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears," for He was not to proclaim as then at hand the Day of Vengeance.

So He read only the parts of the prophecy whose fulfilment was then due to begin.

But today the passage is due to be given as a whole. We are on the very eve of this great Day of Vengeance. We are now proclaiming in the words of the Prophet Zephaniah, "The great Day of the Lord is near; it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the Day of the Lord; the mighty men shall cry there bitterly. That Day is a Day of Wrath, a Day of trouble and distress, a Day of wasting and desolation, a Day of clouds and thick darkness, a Day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities and against the high towers [strong and well intrenched governments]. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord. And their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the Day of the Lord's Wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured with the fire of His jealousy."--Zephaniah 1:14-18.

In that Day of terror and darkness men shall come to learn their need of a strong arm to deliver them. Their pride and self-sufficiency will be humbled into the dust. But out of that awful trouble mankind will come forth chastened and broken, and will be ready to be led out of the ruin and defeat of their own schemes and hopes, out of the darkness and chaos which in their ignorance and selfishness they precipitated upon themselves, out of the power of evil angels, into the light and blessing and deliverance then brought to them by the establishment of the Kingdom of God's dear Son, long promised for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

It will be a lesson never to be forgotten. The sons of God, then exalted to the rulership of the Kingdom, will begin their work of healing and blessing, of binding up the crushed and broken hearts of men. Their own experience in the present life will have taught them how to sympathize with the poor, sin-sick world; and they will be able to pour into humanity's wounds the blessed balm of Gilead, "to give beauty for ashes," to wipe away all tears, and to lead all who will step by step up the grand Highway of Holiness then cast up for the people. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isaiah 35:10.) Only the incorrigible shall again have pronounced upon them the penalty of death--the Second Death, utter destruction. "These shall go away into everlasting cutting off, but the righteous into life eternal."--Matthew 25:46.

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"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all His people."--Psalm 116:12-14.

TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL these words have a peculiar significance which they could not have had to the Prophet David. Nevertheless, we would suppose that the Prophet had to a considerable degree the proper thought as to the sentiment of the words. King David no doubt felt an appreciation of God's goodness. His Psalms show us that he had a very appreciative heart, grateful for the blessings that came to him from the Lord. Properly enough his heart cried out: "What shall I render unto the Lord?" What return can I make for all His lovingkindness?

David knew of God's promise to Abraham; he knew that God would sometime bless all the families of the earth, and that this blessing would come through the Seed of Abraham. The Children of Israel knew that they were Abraham's seed. King David was one of these, and he felt that in some way he would be identified with this Promise. The matter was more or less vague to him; but, nevertheless, Abraham's Seed was to bless the world.

In proposing to "take the cup of salvation," we think the Psalmist had in mind that whatever experiences the Lord might consider necessary for him he would accept; for he must have a share in that salvation. He would continue to call upon the Lord that he might have such a share; he would pay his vows unto the Lord "in the presence of all His people." He had made solemn vows, and he would fulfil them--he would consider this a privilege; he would delight in doing God's will.

R5538 : page 280

DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

To the Christian, however, all this has a much deeper significance. Beginning with our Lord Jesus, these words have a special meaning to each of the sons of God called to joint-heirship with the great Head of the Church. Having been begotten of the Holy Spirit and received into sonship, these wish to make a special return for all God's mercies. These have the actual forgiveness of their sins through Jesus, as David did not. His sins were only typically covered; and if he could say: "What shall I render?" surely much more should we say: "What shall I render unto the Lord?"

The Apostle Paul exhorts us: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God--your reasonable service." This is what we gladly render, then--our bodies as living sacrifices. In every truly noble

heart gratitude is the responsive chord to kindness and love; and no harmony is sweeter or more inspiring to noble deeds and lofty purposes. God would have His children cultivate for their own sake, as well as for the sake of others, all the graces of true nobility and moral excellence. It is therefore most fitting that we should note every deed of love and kindness toward us, and be careful to return the gratitude and appreciation due. How often does love go unrequited because selfishness or thoughtlessness crowds out the nobler instincts of the soul!

While human love and acts of kindness often draw largely upon us for the exercise of this grace of gratitude, appreciation, how much more does the constant loving-kindness and tender mercy of our Heavenly Father thus fittingly draw upon our inmost being to respond in grateful acknowledgment and praise! To Him we are indebted for every good that we possess. What this implies only those can know who have been brought by His love into the secret place of the Most High, and made to feast upon the "finest of the wheat," the wealth of our Father's Storehouse. We are the special objects of His grace.

"HIS LOVING KINDNESS, OH, HOW GREAT!"

And who of us cannot trace a long line of special providences on our behalf? Who of us as we take a mental retrospect of our lives cannot exclaim with the poet:

"Looking back I praise the way
God has led me day by day!"

How wonderfully the Lord has guided His people! His children have ever been His constant care. No good thing hath He withheld from them, and all things have been made to work together for their good if they obeyed Him. Who that has trusted the Lord through many years, through sunshine and shadow, through smiles and tears, by still waters and through storm and tempest, has not proved the verity of His precious promises and His abiding faithfulness! Surely, "Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you!" (Joshua 23:14.) In the smallest and in the greatest affairs of our lives He has ever watched for our interests. Every cloud has had a golden lining!

What, then, shall we render unto the Lord for all His benefits? What have we, indeed, that we have not received from Him? Nothing! As a tender parent loves to see his child appreciatively accept his favors, so does our Heavenly Father regard our attitude toward Him, and our manifestation of appreciation of His favors and love toward us. His unspeakable gifts to us were purchased at a great cost to His heart. Then we will thankfully take the cup of salvation, through faith in our Redeemer, and pay our vows unto the Lord. We will drink this cup with our dear Master--this cup of suffering and of joy. "We will trust and not be afraid."

The Father has made a special provision for those who have made a full surrender of themselves to Him. The

experiences which He has arranged for them constitute "the cup of salvation." And in accepting this cup from the Lord, we are accepting all the experiences that come to us in His providence, whatever they may be--joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure or anything. As Jesus exclaimed: "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" so should this be the language of our hearts. It had in type been foretold of our Lord that He should be lifted up, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. He knew that He was to be the great antitypical Sin-Offering; that He was to be "made sin" for fallen man. Yet this cup that the Father had poured for Him He declared Himself very willing to drink. And this is the cup which He has given to us.

Our Savior said to His disciples who desired to sit next to Him in the Kingdom: "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" He Himself continued to drink of that cup until the end--He drank the dregs of the cup. And so it will be with His followers. We are to drink of this same cup. It is our individual cup, and yet it is His cup. If we be truly loyal we will accept our share of the cup thankfully, gladly. And we know that as we drink of it He will be with us; we shall not be alone. He supervises the experiences of each of His members; and with every temptation and trial He will provide some way of escape, if the trial threatens to become too severe.

THE CUP OF JOY IN THE KINGDOM

On the occasion of the institution of the Memorial of His death, the Master in His conversation with the Apostles said: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that Day when I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom." (Matthew 26:29.) Our Lord was here contrasting two great Days--the Day of suffering and the Day of glory. This Gospel Age has been the Day of suffering. The Millennial Age will be the Day of glory, and is especially spoken of as "the Day of Christ."

The fruit of the vine, the literal cup, represents two thoughts. The cup of wine is produced at the cost of the life of the grape. The grape loses its own individuality. The juice is pressed out, and thus the fruit of the vine is made ready for use. The cup of wine--the juice of the grape--represents, however, not only the crushing of the grape, but also the exhilaration that comes as the result. So in our drinking of this figurative cup. To us it symbolizes our Savior's sufferings and death, and our own participation with Him in these sufferings. But wine also represents joy, gladness, and is thus used in the Scriptures. So in the sense in which the Lord used the words "fruit of the vine," quoted in the preceding paragraph, the cup represented the joys of the Kingdom.

In the earthly experiences of our Lord Jesus the Father marked out for Him a certain specific course. This course constituted His cup of suffering and death.

But the Father promised Him that after He had drunk this cup faithfully, He should be given a different cup, a different experience--glory, honor and immortality. And then the Savior was authorized by the Father to make the same proposition to those who might desire to become His followers--that if they would suffer with Him, would drink His cup of death with Him, then they should participate with Him in His future cup of joy.

"NOW IS THE ACCEPTABLE TIME"

Our cup is a cup of joy and also a cup of bitterness. But when we are called upon to drink a bitter draft, let us remember Him who bravely and faithfully partook of this bitterness, rejoicing to do the Father's will; and let

R5539 : page 281

us take courage, and likewise rejoice that we are accounted worthy to share this cup with our beloved Lord. And as He who was perfect needed strength and help Divine in connection with His experiences in the drinking of the cup, as He sought the Father in earnest prayer for the needed assistance, so must we do. We should also be continually on our guard lest we enter into temptation, lest we look away from Him from whom alone cometh our help.

"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now," said the Psalmist. And "now is the acceptable time--now is the Day of Salvation"--for the Church. Now is the time sacrifices are to be offered--not by and by. The Lord has so arranged that this Vow which we take upon ourselves, this Covenant of Sacrifice, must be fulfilled by us. The flesh which we consecrate must be consumed. If we seek to withdraw the sacrifice from the altar, we shall be dealt with in such a manner as to destroy the flesh; else we ourselves shall be destroyed. If we faithfully drink of the cup which the Father has prepared for us, we shall afterward receive the blessings which He has promised to those who thus drink. Therefore, now, in the present life, we drink of this cup He has given us; for unless we do this now, we shall have no share in the Kingdom blessings in the life to come.

In our Lord's case, literal crucifixion was necessary. He must bear the fullest measure of the Law's demand; He must bear the penalty of its every violation, even as in the case of the vilest criminal under the Law; otherwise He could not have redeemed every Jew. He must bear the curse of the Law--He must hang on a tree. But in our experiences, the cross will not be a literal cross of wood; the nails will not be literal nails; but bitter words and slander and misrepresentation will surely be our portion --and perhaps physical violence in some form to some of the last members of the Body. We do not know.

BY WAY OF THE CROSS

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." We are all to pass through the trying experiences represented by the wine-press. We are to lay down our lives in the Divine service. We are to submit ourselves to the crushing experiences, to be obliterated as individuals, in the human sense, and to become New Creatures. "If we suffer [with Him], we shall also reign with Him"--not otherwise. So we joyfully accept the invitation to drink of His cup. And not until the cup has been drained to the last shall we receive the other cup--the cup of Kingdom joys. While our Lord had a great blessing in the obedience which He rendered to the Father, yet it was a trying time for Him down to the last moment, when He cried, "It is finished." And so with the Church. We must drink all of the cup; none of the contents is to be left. We must endure all of the experiences.

All the sufferings of Christ will be complete when the Body of Christ shall have finished its course. The new cup of joy was given our Lord when He was received up into glory. Then all the angels of God worshiped Him. Soon our cup of joy will be given to us. No doubt it was a glorious time when the sleeping saints were awakening in the spring of 1878, and entered into their reward and received the cup of blessing. And one by one, those who were alive and remained at the Coming of the Master are being gathered Home. Undoubtedly we shall all partake of this joy with them soon, if we are faithful. We believe the fulness of joy will not be reached until all the members of Christ are with Him beyond the veil. Then we shall share His Throne and partake of His glory. Then with our beloved Lord we shall drink of the "new wine" in the Kingdom; for the promise is to all His faithful saints.

"YE ARE MY WITNESSES, SAITH JEHOVAH"

The concluding statement of the Psalmist as given in our text is that he would pay his vows "in the presence of all His [God's] people." It is not enough that we shall be loyal in our hearts; but the Lord desires a public confession, a witness before men. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10.) And all the witnesses for the Truth must be martyrs for the Truth. They must, in other words, be willing to suffer for it. And so it will be to a large extent with those who are faithfully, courageously, holding up the banner of Truth. They will be targets for the Adversary.

Our Master said that whoever would not confess Him before men, He would not confess before the Father and before the holy angels. Only those who are thoroughly loyal are to be of this very select company of which our Lord is the Head, and which is soon now to be gathered into the Heavenly Garner.

Then let us appreciate more and more this "cup of

blessing" which we are privileged to drink with our blessed Master; and let us "call upon the name of the Lord" for grace to help in every time of need. We need Him daily, hourly, momentarily. And we may come to the Throne of Grace at any time in the name of our great Advocate.

Our Father's ear is ever open to the cry of His children. They are as dear to Him "as the apple of His eye." They "are graven upon the palms of His hands." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you," is His promise to His own. All that we can render will be at best very, very little in return for all His bounties, for all His matchless grace toward us. But the measure of love and zeal that accompanies our little all will indicate the measure of our gratitude to our Heavenly Father and our great Redeemer.

"What shall I render, Lord, to Thee?
Thy love surpasses all my thought!
What can a fitting tribute be
To Him who my poor life hath bought?"

"Who sought me in my low estate,
And raised me up to heights Divine!
What words can fitly sound Thy praise,
Or thought encompass love like Thine?"

"What shall I render, Lord, to Thee?
My heart, my strength, my life, I bring!
My hands, my voice, in service glad,
To Thee, my Savior and my King!"

DAY BY DAY, HOUR BY HOUR

"God broke our years to hours and days
That, hour by hour and day by day,
Just going on a little way,
We might be able all along
To keep quite strong.
Should all the weight of life
Be laid across our shoulders, and the future, rife
With woe and struggle, meet us face to face
At just one place,
We could not go.
Our feet would stop; and so
God lays a little on us every day.
And never, I believe, on all the way
Will burdens bear so deep,
Or pathway lie so threatening and so steep,
But we can go, if by God's power
We only bear the burden of the hour." Anon.

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THE CHRISTIAN'S TOWER OF STRENGTH

"The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."--HEBREWS 13:6.

THE Christian's position in the world is a peculiar one. None others can afford to be so courageous and independent as he. Yet the true child of God is not self-sufficient nor independent of any outside help. He is exhorted in the Word of the Lord to be not boastful, but humble-minded, realizing his powerlessness of himself and his need of God. Indeed, unless he is humble-minded he cannot be pleasing to the Lord. But at the same time he is to be full of courage and confidence. No power in the Universe is able to cope with our God; and He has declared that He is the Support and Shield of His children. He is the Strong Tower of those who put their trust in Him.

If we abide in Christ and His Word abides in us, He will be our Deliverer in six troubles, and in the seventh He will not forsake us--because we have been called of God, because we have responded to that call, because we are seeking to glorify Him in our bodies. Hence we need not fear what any man can do unto us. The Apostle Paul, who exhorts us to courage and confident trust in God, was a noble example of courageous faith. He tells us why we have such abundant reason for assurance of faith and absence of fear of man. He says, "Let your conversation [conduct, manner of life] be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

TRUE FAITH NOT PRESUMPTION

We should not say, The Lord is my Helper, and therefore He will not suffer my house to burn, nor burglars to break in and steal my belongings. I will not lock my doors at night; for the Lord is watching over me and mine. This would not be the spirit of a sound mind. It would not be true faith, but presumption. We should take

all reasonable precautions to prevent losses of such kinds. The Lord expects us to do all in our power for our own protection, and not expect Him to work unnecessary miracles to protect us from our own carelessness and inefficiency. Under such circumstances He might allow us to become involved in difficulty and loss, and thus to learn a needed lesson. We are stewards of whatever the Lord

has entrusted to us, and He expects us to exercise care in regard to whatever is properly under our care but belonging to Him. We should have buckets and water at hand so as to be ready in case of fire. We should have proper fastenings upon our doors and our windows. When our own duty is done, we are to leave ourselves fully in the Lord's hands, knowing that all will be well with us.

If the Lord permits seeming calamity to come, we may rest assured that it will work out our good, if we are properly exercised by the experience. After having done our part, we should trust all consequences to Him, not doubting that He will care for us in His own best way. The Lord will give us whatever help along temporal lines He sees is for the highest interests of the New Creature, if we do not remove ourselves from His keeping and seek to manage our own interests. Even in the event of such a mistake, if we come to see where we have been wilful and have leaned to our own understanding and renew full allegiance to the Lord, the difficulties in which we have become involved may prove to be a real blessing in opening our eyes to our wrong course, in showing us our own insufficiency to guide ourselves, and in bringing us wholly back to God.

"THAT WICKED ONE TOUCHETH HIM NOT"

Our highest interests, our real interests, are matters of our Father's constant care. If we keep very near to the Lord, we are protected from the power of the fallen angels, who would, if permitted, bring about our ensnarement and overthrow. They cannot really harm us if we are watching and keeping our garments white. Only a lack of faithfulness would subject us to their power to any extent so far as our New Creature interests are concerned. They can neither harm our bodies in any way nor cause any violence to us, unless the Lord permits it for our highest good--perhaps for our deliverance and exaltation, as in the case of our Master.

Let us, then, keep ourselves, that "that Wicked One touch us not." We are subject to various attacks by the deluded servants of the powers of darkness. There may be attacks upon our good name, our reputation, our bodies, or what not, with more or less legality. We are to a considerable extent subject to man, through "the powers that be." Yet our bitterest enemies are powerless to touch us, unless permitted by the Lord. And we cannot be touched by the great Adversary, if we remain true to our Covenant--true to the Vows we have taken to the Lord. The Adversary can never touch our real selves as New Creatures save by our own unfaithfulness.

WE WILL WORSHIP OUR GOD ALONE

It may be the will of God to permit us to suffer, just as He permitted John the Baptist to be imprisoned and finally beheaded, just as He permitted Jesus to be arrested

and crucified, and He has permitted many of His saints in the past to be maltreated or killed. But we need not fear what men may do unto us, knowing that our God, whose we are and whom we serve, will be with us constantly, and will cause all things to work out His own glorious purposes for us and in us.

We would, of course, be glad to please men, if this were possible. But wherever it is a question of pleasing God or pleasing man, we will say, as did the three young Hebrews to the king of Babylon: "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us....But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." We will not do anything contrary to the Divine will, to the command of Jehovah. We will worship our God alone!

When the Jewish Council (Acts 4:13-20) commanded the Apostles Peter and John to speak no more in the name of Jesus, their reply was: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." When Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, said to our Lord on the night of His arrest and trial, "Knowest Thou that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?" Jesus answered: "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above." So it is with all the footstep followers of the Master. God's grace will be sufficient. Man is powerless to harm a hair of our heads, unless it is permitted of our Father in Heaven for His glory and our own highest welfare.

COURAGE BORN OF FAITH

The world has often wondered at the calmness of the Lord's humble little ones under circumstances which would cause the stoutest heart to quail. But to follow the course in life which will glorify our God and magnify His grace, to be able to meet wisely and courageously the trials and difficulties as they come to us as Christians, representatives of the King of Heaven, and to meet them in

R5540 : page 283

the spirit of rejoicing, counting our tribulations all joy, it is necessary that our hearts be in attune with the Lord, that we have no will but His, and that the fear of man, which bringeth a snare, shall be overcome. We cannot accomplish this in our own strength, but in the strength of God alone. We are instructed to fear Jehovah, and not to fear a weak mortal. The righteous are as bold as a lion, as gentle as a dove, as meek as a lamb. This peculiar combination of boldness, gentleness and meekness should characterize every Christian.

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MARY'S SWEET PERFUME

--OCTOBER 4.--MARK 14:1-11.--

"She hath done what she could."--VERSE 8.

THE last five days of Jesus' ministry are full of interest. The incident especially marking our lesson occurred at the close of the Jewish Sabbath day just preceding our Lord's crucifixion. Jesus and His disciples had come to the Passover Feast, He telling them that He would there be crucified, but they thinking that He was speaking in some kind of figurative language. Indeed, at no time during Jesus' ministry did His crucifixion seem to be less likely than when it occurred. His preaching and the preaching of His disciples, first the Twelve and afterward the Seventy, had awakened considerable interest throughout all Jewry--especially in Galilee.

Great throngs of people were at Jerusalem to celebrate this Feast, which would last a week. Thousands of them had heard of Jesus; and many of them had been recipients of His mercy in the healing of their diseases. Just a short time before, a considerable number had discussed the propriety of proclaiming Jesus king. Indeed, on the very next day after the incident of this lesson, the multitude, some following and some preceding Him while He rode upon the ass, had acclaimed Him king. They had cried out, "Hosanna in the highest to the Son of David, who cometh in the name of Jehovah!"

But the Master knew that the masses would be only as children in the hands of the great teachers of the time. He knew that there was a murderous hatred against Him amongst the chief priests, the Scribes and the Pharisees. True, it is written that they hated Him without a cause; that is to say, without a just cause (John 15:25); but they had cause enough to hate Him, from their own viewpoint.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE RELIGIOUS TEACHERS

Although the Jewish nation had lost its liberty long before and had no prospect of ever winning it back, nevertheless there had never been a time since the days of Solomon when their political prospects looked so favorable. The Roman Emperors had manifested their willingness to co-operate with these very priests, scribes and religious leaders. The Emperors wished merely to rule, and realized that they could exercise more influence through these religious leaders than in any other way.

Thus the great religious teachers felt themselves sponsors for the people. They perceived that their hold over the more ignorant Jews was being impaired by the teachings of Jesus. They felt so satisfied with themselves as

claimed representatives of God and as intermediaries with the Roman government that they did not think it worth while to make inquiry respecting Jesus and His teachings. Indeed, from their viewpoint, everything was going along reasonably well. They could wish for nothing better than that their plans might not be interfered with.

Many of them had lost all faith in God and in a future life. Others, retaining faith in God and His promised Kingdom, thought that affiliation with the Roman Empire would be the best way of strengthening their nation and preparing it for the Messianic glories. From this viewpoint, Jesus was a disturber of the peace. He did not belong to their clique. His manner, no less than His teachings, reproved them and tended to break all their influence with the people.

The religious leaders had heard that Jesus was coming to the Feast. Our lesson tells us that they discussed how He could be wisely dealt with, killed, gotten rid of in any way. They seem to have been unanimous in believing that His destruction would be for the good of the Lord's

R5541 : page 283

Cause, as they misunderstood that Cause. Another Scripture tells us that Caiaphas, the chief priest, had declared that it was expedient that one man should perish rather than that the nation should perish. (John 11:49-52.) They fancied that the teachings of Jesus, if allowed to proceed, would certainly awaken the people to a faith in the Messianic Kingdom. They thought of Jesus as an imposter, but feared that His teachings would incite some kind of fanatical uprising.

The religious leaders had murder in their hearts. It was merely a question of how they could accomplish the murder and deceive the people, so as not to provoke those who had begun to exercise faith in Jesus. Their conclusion was that the Feast time would be an unfavorable one; for He would be surrounded by the multitude, some of whom thought Him a great prophet, others of whom considered Him to be the Messiah. Such was their attitude of mind when Judas went to them privately, suggesting that he would be in touch with the movements of Jesus, and that for a certain amount of money he would inform them of the most suitable time for making Jesus a prisoner --a time when the multitude would not be with Him. His plan was finally decided upon and carried out.

THE FEAST--THE ANOINTING

Jesus and His disciples were the honored guests of that Lazarus whom Jesus awakened after he had been dead three days. It was at the home of Simon the Leper, who probably was dead. Jesus was the guest of honor, His disciples sharing with Him. Martha and Mary, with Lazarus, were hostesses. The supper had progressed when Mary entered with a vial of very expensive perfume,

the contents of which she poured upon the head of Jesus and, according to another account, subsequently poured a portion of the same perfume upon His feet.

The house was filled with the perfume; Jesus was honored. Then came a voice of murmuring--"Why this waste?" St. John tells us that the leader of the murmurers was Judas, and that evidently several were influenced by his speech. Judas posed as the friend of the poor, intimating that his regrets were not selfish or personal, but that he thought what good might have been done to others.

The Apostles afterward learned that this speech was hypocritical. At the time Jesus understood the anger of Judas, which led him openly to insult one of the hostesses of the occasion. St. John tells us the anger of Judas was because he had failed to get this money himself. He was the treasurer of the little company of disciples; he carried the money-bag; and, as they afterward came to know, he was a thief, who privately was laying by for himself. (John 12:6.) And Judas is probably not the only person who has plead for the poor and at the same time sought to divert funds to himself.

R5541 : page 284

THE MEASURE OF MARY'S DEVOTION

The statement of Judas that the perfume was worth three hundred pence is probably not an extreme valuation. Three hundred pence would be about six dollars. At a time when the silver penny, worth sixteen cents, represented a day's labor, three hundred pence would practically represent the labor of a year. Sixteen dollars per ounce, sometimes more, has been paid for the attar of rose; and history tells us of fabulous prices paid for perfumes in the past.

Today perfumes can be made and sold at trifling cost, in comparison with the past. And yet the ancients were passionately fond of perfumes; and the liberal use of them, as in the case before us, marked a deep respect, yea, reverence. Mary doubtless felt that her very highly esteemed friend Jesus, who had brought her brother back from the tomb, was none other than the Messiah, the Son and Representative of Jehovah God. The reverence which she felt for Jehovah she sought to express toward His highest Representative, Jesus.

Poor Mary must have felt quite crushed as she heard the harsh criticism. But Jesus came to her defense, saying, "Let her alone. Why trouble ye the woman? She hath wrought a good work on Me. She hath done what she could; she hath anointed My body for its burial. The poor ye have always with you; and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; but Me ye have not always."

Surely the Master's approval comforted Mary; and wherever the Gospel of the Lord has been preached, this story of her loving devotion, to the extent of considerable cost and probably considerable self-denial, has been told

as a memorial of her, not merely to honor her, but especially to inspire and encourage others of God's people to the obtaining and exercising of a love which delights in service, yea, in costly sacrifice.

A SUGGESTION WORTH CONSIDERATION

A Boston printer, now dead, put on his business card the following helpful and practical suggestions:--"Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead, but fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving and cheering words while their ears can hear them. The kind things you say after they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffins, bestow now; and so brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them.

"If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them now in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered, while I need them and can enjoy them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, and a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial.

"Post-mortem kindness cannot cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the coffin shed no fragrance backward over the weary way by which the loved ones have traveled."

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-R5541 : page 284

TWO PASSOVER MEMORIALS

--OCTOBER 11.--MARK 14:12-25.--

"As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do proclaim the Lord's death till He come."--1 CORINTHIANS 11:26.

THE SUBJECT of today's lesson is one of the most interesting features of Jesus' earthly ministry. He knew that the Apostles did not know that this was to be His last supper with them. Although He had intimated the nearness of His death, His disciples had found it impossible to comprehend that any such disaster could be so near at hand as He had intimated. Jesus, however, with full consciousness of what it meant, was longing for the consummation of His work. It was probably on the very day at the close of which He and His disciples went to eat the Passover that Jesus said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I in difficulty

until it be accomplished!"--a baptism into death, which was finished the following day.

Peter and John were the two disciples sent to make ready the Passover. Evidently Jesus was at Bethany, at the home of Lazarus, when He sent this word. It is supposed that the large upper room in which the Passover was eaten by Jesus and His disciples was the same one in which the Apostles and others were gathered to await the Pentecostal blessing. This very room is still pointed out by tradition, but is controlled by Mohammedans, who are especially jealous of Christians.

In the evening of the same day, Jesus with the entire Twelve met in this room, all the preparations having been attended to. They met to celebrate the Jewish Passover at its appointed time. The lamb had been roasted, and the unleavened bread prepared, also the bitter herbs. Everything, we may be sure, was exactly in conformity with the original requirement; for Jesus and His Apostles were bound by every feature of the Jewish Law as much as were other Jews--the New Dispensation not yet having been ushered in. Every feature of the Law was binding up to the time of the Pentecostal blessing, which marked the Divine approval of the sacrifice of Jesus and the Divine acceptance of all those who had become His disciples by a full consecration.

KINGDOM HONORS DESIRED

So far from realizing that they were on the eve of a great tragedy, the Apostles believed that Jesus would very soon be enthroned as King. They remembered His promise that they should sit with Him in His Throne. This promise seemed so near of realization to them that they could think of little else but the degree of honor which they would have in the Kingdom. They seemed to feel that unless they contended stoutly for it, they would not get so honorable positions. Perceiving their attitude of mind, Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but ye shall not be so: but he that will be greatest amongst you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."

These were new standards, difficult for them to understand; and apparently they are still difficult for the followers of Jesus to comprehend fully. The One who will be chief in the Kingdom will be the One who was the chief Servant in the flesh. This greatest Servant of all was, of course, the Lord Jesus Himself. But the Master intimates that the same principle holds good in respect to all of His followers. Whoever of them will most faithfully, most earnestly, most zealously, serve the brethren will thereby be increasing his favor with God, and be preparing himself for so much higher station in Messiah's Kingdom.

With the thought that any menial service would signify admission of their unworthiness of a high place, the disciples made no arrangement for feet-washing, none wishing to assume the role of servant. In that sandy country

feet-washing was almost a necessity when sandals were worn. By way of rebuke, Jesus arose from the table and

R5542 : page 285

performed this menial service for His disciples, telling them the import of the lesson--namely, humility--and intimating that no matter how humble a service they might be able to render to each other, they should be glad to render it.

The lesson is still with us, not as a form or ceremony to be performed, but as an illustration of a principle. Any humble act of service done to one of the Lord's brethren corresponds to this feet-washing.

THE CRISIS IN JUDAS' LIFE

The Passover Supper proceeded--the eating of the lamb with the bitter herbs and the unleavened bread, which considerably resembled thick pancakes, and which was sometimes used instead of a spoon to sop up the essence of the meat. One of the Gospels declares that Jesus began to be heavy-hearted, and then said, One of you Twelve, eating with Me as My guest, as a member of My family, is plotting My betrayal.

There may have been a double object in this statement. First, it would show the disciples that Jesus was fully aware of the premeditated betrayal. They would not, therefore, think that something had happened to Him unexpectedly, or out of the Divine Program. Second, our Lord may have meant this as a final reproof to Judas--to startle him, to cause him to think. At very best a traitor's course is dishonorable, but doubly so when the traitor accepts the hospitality of the one against whom he is plotting and eats his bread.

Consternation spread amongst the disciples; and one after another they asked, "Is it I?" The import of this question would be, It is not I whom You have meant! Even Judas joined in the general inquiry, "Is it I?" The Apostle John was seated next to Jesus, and St. Peter beckoned to him that he should ask the Master who was meant. It was probably a whispered inquiry, heard by Jesus only. Our Lord's whispered reply was, "It is the one to whom I will give a sop." Presently, having prepared a special sop, a mark of special interest, He handed it to Judas. Thus St. John and St. Peter knew the affair.

Apparently it was but a short time after this that Judas withdrew, the record being that "Satan entered into him." The spirit of the Evil One got complete control of him while he stopped, and weighed and balanced the matter of selling his best Friend for thirty pieces of silver. It is entirely probable, therefore, that Judas was not present when Jesus, a little later, instituted the Memorial Supper which Christians now celebrate.

THE SIGNIFICATION OF THE MEMORIAL

The Memorial Supper which Jesus instituted is totally separate and distinct from the Passover Supper, and yet they are closely related; for the one was the type and the other its archetype, or higher type, with a still higher signification. In the one a literal lamb was used to typify Jesus, the Lamb of God; in the other, the archetype, the breaking of the bread represented the death of Jesus.

The Jews celebrated the birth of their nation and its deliverance from Egyptian bondage. This had its start in the passing over of their first-born when the tenth plague came upon the Egyptians. St. Paul shows us that the first-borns of Israel, spared in that Passover night, typified the Church of the First-borns, spared, or passed over, in the present time, while the night of sin prevails and before the morning of Messiah's Kingdom is ushered in.

More and more Bible students are reaching the conclusion that the Memorial of Christ's death should not be celebrated monthly or quarterly or weekly; but that it should be considered the archetype of the Jewish Passover, and should properly be celebrated annually, and at about the same time as the Jewish Passover.

We are not to understand that the Apostles comprehended the meaning of Jesus' words when He explained to them the signification of the Supper which He instituted. Rather, as He had already foretold, the Holy Spirit brought these things to their attention and enabled them to comprehend their meaning, after they had received the Pentecostal blessing and enlightenment. Now we may see the import of Jesus' words, "This is My body, broken for you." We perceive that He could not have meant, as some have thought, that the bread was turned into His actual body and the wine into His actual blood. On the contrary, He still had His actual body and His actual blood. He could not, therefore, have meant more than to say, This bread symbolically represents My body, which is to be broken for you; and this wine represents My blood, which is to be shed for you tomorrow--My life given up.

Neither should we think that Jesus meant that special virtue would result to the disciples from the eating of that bread and the drinking of that literal cup. We should properly look far beyond these things, and see that He meant this: Only as you by faith partake of the merits secured by My death can you have the great blessing provided for you as My disciples. The Apostles believed that the death of Jesus was for their sins, and that it constituted the basis of their acceptance with the Heavenly Father. They realized that only as they appropriated the life of Christ would they be truly the recipients of all these blessings.

St. Paul points out for us another important signification of this bread and cup. He declares the oneness of Christ and His Church. He tells us that there is but the one Loaf and the one Cup. Primarily, this Loaf was Christ Jesus; but in a secondary sense all the followers of Christ, after having been justified through His Sacrifice,

are privileged to become members of His Body, parts of the one Loaf that is being broken. Likewise, after partaking of the merit of Christ's blood, His sacrifice, all of His true followers are counted as members with Him and as participators in that one Cup.

Hear the Apostle's words: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ? For we being many are one Bread, and one Body; for we are partakers of that one Bread."-- 1 Corinthians 10:16,17.

THE SEALING OF THE NEW COVENANT

Jesus spoke of the cup, the fruit of the vine, as representing the blood of the New Covenant. The Law Covenant was the Old Covenant, which failed to bring the blessings to the Jews, because they could not keep it. Hence, also, they were not qualified to bless the other nations of the earth. But God promised a New Covenant, a better one, which would be introduced by a new and higher, or superior, Mediator than Moses. That New Covenant, God declares, will accomplish what the old Law Covenant failed to accomplish; for the New Law Covenant will be inaugurated by Messiah, its Mediator, at His Second Advent. His Kingdom, established in power and great glory, will rule, bless and instruct mankind, and will "take away the stony heart and will give a heart of flesh" to all who will respond to those blessed opportunities.

Jesus' death constituted the blood which seals, or makes efficacious, that New Covenant. But mark further: The Church is not to be blessed under that New Covenant of the Millennial Age, which will be inaugurated at the Second Coming of Jesus, at the establishment of His Kingdom. The Church is to be blessed in advance of that New Covenant. Indeed, their consecrated lives

R5542 : page 286

(blood), accepted by our Lord, are counted in as a part of His own sacrifice, which seals the New Covenant. Hence the New Covenant cannot be fully sealed until the entire Body of Christ, which is the Church, shall have shared with Him in the drinking of His Cup--in the sacrifice of earthly rights, privileges, life itself.

THE COVENANT OF SACRIFICE

Meantime, we see that Jesus and the Church receive their reward neither under the Law Covenant nor under the New Covenant, but under a special Covenant, called a Covenant of Sacrifice. Reference is made to this Covenant of Christ and the Church in the Psalms, where the Lord is represented as saying, "Gather My saints together unto Me, those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice."

(Psalm 50:5.) The gathering of those who enter into this special Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord has been in progress for now over eighteen hundred years. We have every reason to believe that the sacrifice is nearly completed, and that soon all the sacrificers, members of the Body of Christ, will be glorified, changed by the power of the First Resurrection and will enter into the joys of their Lord, according to His promise: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."

Our Lord indicated that He would no longer drink of the Cup; nor did He. His work, His drinking of the Cup, was finished the next day, on Calvary. There He completed the drinking of the Cup which the Father had poured for Him. The Father has poured the same Cup for all the followers of Jesus; and they must drink of His Cup, as well as partake of the merits of His broken Body, if they would be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom, soon to be established.

This was the import of our Lord's words to St. James and St. John, His disciples, when they asked for special

R5543 : page 286

places in the Kingdom. Jesus asked, "Are ye able [willing] to drink of the Cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They heartily declared their willingness. Jesus assured them that they should have their request; that if they were willing, He would see to it that they would drink of His Cup. And so it is with all of His followers. The Scriptures assure them, saying, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to His purpose."

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R5543 : page 286

INTERESTING LETTERS

A REPLY BY THE EDITOR

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

I am pleased to acknowledge receipt of yours of 16th ultimo.

After making copies of your letter, I went to the Editor of the Gazette and submitted to him your original letter. After reading it he said he would publish all except that portion relating to ordination. I hand you herewith the page of the Gazette containing the article, and I praise the Lord for rewarding your efforts in defending the Truth here.

Through the Lord's providence I had heretofore been able, apparently, to parry every blow directed against the Truth, but in this attack of Rev. Ross the javelin seemed to pass me and strike notwithstanding my best efforts to turn it aside; but now the darkness disappears and the light again

shines on the cause of Present Truth through the good defense which you have offered; the Lord has shown us again how He can make the "Wrath of His enemies to praise Him." The Editor of the Mirror (Protestant), a contemporary of the Gazette, told me he would run your letter in full.

Dear Brother, would it not be well to let your letter come out in one of the BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY or in THE WATCH TOWER? It would give many of the dear friends some good ideas as to how to offer defense along this special line of the Adversary's attacks on you and the cause of Present Truth. I received a letter from a brother in Grenada, stating that some prominent Plymouth Brethren were circulating Rev. Ross' pamphlet. Of course, they will not circulate so very many, as the pamphlet costs 10 cents, and very few of the Plymouth Brethren or other denominations are willing to pay that much to defend their errors.

How grand it will be when the people are delivered from the bondage of error! I am glad for the ministers' sake also, for they will not have to fight any more, and I am sure that will be a great relief to their minds! One Catholic gentleman told me that Catholics and others could argue with us until we got to the Bible, and then they had to stop!

Assuring you of my continued love and fullest confidence, which you have always had and which have never wavered since I laid my life upon the altar of sacrifice in 1897, I am,
Yours in the Redeemer's service, E. J. COWARD.

Below we reprint the portion of our letter as published in The Port-of-Spain Gazette, Trinidad, B.W.I.:

PASTOR RUSSELL REPLIES.

MR. E. J. COWARD,

Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I.

Dear Brother in Christ:--Yours of October 3d is before me. Thanks for its clippings from the Gazette and the Evangelical Christian.

I am quite familiar with the slanderous screed issued by Rev. J. J. Ross. In Canada they have just two laws governing libel. Under the one the falsifier may be punished by the assessment of damages and money. Under the other, criminal libel, he is subject to imprisonment. I entered suit against Rev. Ross under the criminal act, at the advice of my attorneys, because, as he has no property, a suit for damages would not intimidate him nor stop him. The lower Court found him guilty of libel. But when the case went to the second Judge he called up an English precedent, in which it was held that criminal libel would only operate in a case where the jury felt sure that there was danger of rioting or violence. As there was no danger that myself or friends would resort to rioting, the case was thrown out. I could still bring my action for financial damages, but it would be costly to me and impotent as respects Rev. Ross. He,

however, is having troubles of his own. Since he began to attack me, he has split two Baptist Congregations--one in Toronto, the other in Hamilton. The last heard of him, he was in London, Ont., and again in trouble with his congregation. A lying spirit is sure to be a boomerang.

As respects my education in Greek and Hebrew: Not only do I not claim very special knowledge of either language, but I claim that not one minister in a thousand is either a Hebrew or a Greek scholar. To be able to spell out a few Greek words is of no earthly value. Nor is it necessary longer to study these languages, in order to have knowledge of the Bible. Our Presbyterian friends have gotten out at great cost Young's Analytical Hebrew, Chaldaic, Greek and English Lexicon Concordance, which anyone may procure. And our Methodist friends have issued a similar work--Strong's Analytical Concordance and Lexicon. And there is a still older one entitled Englishman's Hebrew, Chaldaic, Greek and English Lexicon and Concordance. Additionally, Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon is a standard authority. The prices of these are not beyond the reach of the average man. By these works scholarly information respecting the original text of the Bible is obtainable. I have all four of these works and have used them faithfully. Very few college professors, even, would risk to give a critical translation of any text of Scripture without consulting these very works of reference, which are standard. To merely learn to read the Greek and Hebrew without a six years' course in their grammars is more likely to hinder than to help in Bible study; far better take the acknowledged scholarship to which I have referred.

Additionally I remind you of the many translations of the Bible now extant--all of them very good. I have all of these and find them useful in comparison in the study of any text--one sometimes giving a thought which another may not. The other day, for curiosity's sake, I counted Bibles in different translations, etc., in my study and found that I have thirty-two.

As respects my business dealings, Brother Coward, I need not remind you that American Courts are very strict and that if anybody feels that I have wronged him out of a dollar, he would have no difficulty in haling me into Court. You have my assurance, dear Brother, that I do not owe any man on earth a penny and that I have never taken a penny from anyone unjustly. On the contrary, as you know, I have spent

R5543 : page 287

several small fortunes in seeking to do good to my fellow-men --in helping them to a better understanding of God and the Bible. Having once been an infidel myself, and having subsequently found that I had confused the teachings of the Bible with the teachings of the creeds, and that the Bible's teaching is a glorious, grand doctrine, it has since been my business and pleasure to do all in my power to help fellow-mortals out of darkness into the true light.

* * *

If you choose, you may make such extracts of this as are likely to reach intelligent people through any of the newspapers. But really I care little for what men may say or think about me. Of course, such things are painful; but they are only what the Bible tells us will be more or less the experience of all who would be loyal to God and His Word. So persecuted they the saints and prophets of the past--even the Master Himself. And as for how I got my education--it seems to me of little consequence. I have enough to serve my own purposes, and, apparently, too much to please Rev. Ross and others of his type, who, not knowing how to meet my theological teachings, do not attempt to do so at all, but merely charge me with ignorance. As I read his vile slanders I thought of what the New Testament says about St. Peter and St. John. They were so woefully ignorant that all the people perceived that they were "ignorant and unlearned men." If they were living today, I suppose that the Rev. Ross and Co. would be after them to show them up as not having been ordained by the Baptists and not knowing anything anyway.

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

The portion of our communication omitted above, follows:

I need not tell you how absurdly untrue Rev. Ross' statements are in respect to my ordination; but really it seems strange how little people use their thinking faculties in such matters--how few who would read the Rev. Ross' statements would see their absurdity. For instance, he is a Baptist and was authorized or ordained by the Baptists--not by Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Catholics or Episcopalians. Would an Episcopalian recognize Rev. Ross' ordination? Surely not! Would a Roman Catholic recognize his ordination? Of course not. Ordination merely means authorization. The Catholics will authorize, or ordain, those only who belong to their faith. The Baptists will ordain, or authorize, those only who are Baptists. How foolish, then, to talk about ordination from their standpoint!

But ordination from my standpoint, the Bible standpoint, the standpoint of an increasing number of Bible students all the world over, is different. It is a Divine ordination. But our Baptist friends and our Methodist friends would say that they, also, recognize Bible ordination, that they are not

R5544 : page 287

merely dependent upon each other. But we challenge them to prove that they ever had a Divine ordination or that they ever think of it. They merely think of a sectarian ordination, or authorization, each from his own sect or party.

True, Catholics and Episcopalians are different and do recognize a Divine ordination. They claim that Jesus ordained His Twelve Apostles and that these have successors in the Bishops, who are styled "apostolic bishops," and under

the theory of "apostolic succession" have the same power as the original Twelve Apostles to ordain and to teach. Bible students believe that they err in this claim and that the doctrine of "apostolic succession" is unscriptural. The Bible recognizes only Twelve Apostles. More than that, the Bible denounces all apostolic bishops as being in error. Referring to them, Jesus said that they claimed to be apostles, and are not, but do lie. (Revelation 2:2.) In other words, contrary to the superstitions of Catholics and Episcopalians, their bishops have no authority whatever to ordain anybody.

What, then, is the proper ordination of a minister of Christ, and how can it be obtained, according to the Bible?

We answer that God's ordination, or authorization, of any man to preach is by the impartation of the Holy Spirit to him. Whoever has received the Holy Spirit has received the power and authority to teach and to preach in the name of God. Whoever has not received the Holy Spirit has no Divine authority or sanction to his preaching. In other words, he is unordained in the highest, truest sense of that word.

What is the secret of the opposition and slander that is being raised up against me and against all who, like me, are Bible students? It is malice, hatred, envy, strife, on the part of those who are still hugging the nonsense of the Dark Ages and neglecting true Bible study. They see that their influence is waning. But they have not yet awakened to the true situation. They think that I am responsible for their smaller congregations and small collections. But not so. The real difficulty with them is that the people are becoming more intelligent and can no longer be driven with the crack of a merely man-devised whip of fear. The colleges of the world have been teaching that the Bible is a foolish old book, until few preachers and few of the educated of the world believe it to be of Divine inspiration. Losing faith in the Bible, in the preachers and in the creeds, the people are drifting toward atheism. That is the real difficulty.

While my work does not, indeed, help to build up any of the sects of Christendom, it is helping to establish Christian people in a true faith in God and in the Bible. It is giving them a firm foundation and an intelligent understanding such as they had prayed for and hoped for before, but never found. This is not because of great ability on my part, nor on the part of my associates, but because God's time has come for blessing Bible study in the light of present-day opportunities. It is as Jesus promised--the Wise Virgin class of Christian people, who "trim their lamps"--study the Bible --find it to shine out brightly and to point them to the new Age of blessing under Messiah's Kingdom.

page 287

"TIMES AND SEASONS"

DEAR PASTOR:--

The letter of a dear brother in THE WATCH TOWER of a somewhat recent date, drawing attention to the fact that a

total eclipse of the sun would occur August 21, visible to the whole of "Christendom," exactly 40 days before October 1, the day which we believe marks the close of the Gentile Times, interested me deeply--particularly so, in view of the other coincidences which specially mark this year. April 10 synchronized with Good Friday and with the 14th of Nisan. On that day the moon reached its full at the moment (as near as we can ascertain) in which our Lord died (3:49 p.m. Jerusalem time).

But more remarkable still, the following is worthy of notice: Next to the Passover, the great day of the Israelites was the Day of Atonement, which was commanded to be observed on the 10th day of the seventh month. (Leviticus 23:27; 16:29.) After the daily sacrifice, the high priest sacrificed for himself and his fellow-priests a bullock for a sin-offering. After this a goat was offered, part of its blood being sprinkled in the Most Holy and the remainder, mingled with the blood of the bullock, was sprinkled toward both sides of the sanctuary. "Then shalt thou make the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the 10th day of the seventh month; in the Day of Atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land."--Leviticus 25:9.

If we now turn to the dedication of the Temple, we find that it also took place in the seventh month, and "fire came down from Heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifice." (2 Chronicles 7:1.) This apparently was on the 10th day of the month, the Atonement Day; and it was followed by the Feast of Tabernacles, beginning on the 15th day of the month. Then the assembly was dismissed on the 23d day of the month. (2 Chronicles 7:10.) This 10th day of the seventh month (Jewish sacred year) so particularly marked, falls this year on the 30th of September, the day closing the Gentile Times.

The real 14th of Nisan this year seems to be an uncertainty among the brethren, some considering it to be April 9th. Page 470, Vol. VI., states: "The Hebrew year begins in the Spring with the first appearance of a new moon after the Spring Equinox." Some seeing that the new moon occurred on March 26th at 6:9 P.M., Greenwich time, consider the following day to be the 1st of Nisan. But the Lord never acknowledged either Greenwich or New York time, and the time mentioned is 8:30 P.M. Jerusalem time, which was after sunset. The appearance of the new moon was therefore on the 27th, and the following day, the 28th, was the 1st of Nisan, commencing the Jewish sacred year. With all Christian love, dear Pastor,
Yours in His service, A VINEYARD LABORER.--England.

READ IT TEN TIMES

A deeply interested subscriber to THE WATCH TOWER writes:

"Will you please publish the First Chapter of the Second Volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES in THE WATCH TOWER? I have just read it for the tenth time, and its every word is so full of meaning, strength and encouragement to me that I would like others to have the same."

Instead of re-publishing the Chapter we refer our readers to the Volume, merely approving the above suggestion of re-reading it.

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page 288

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