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A number of Classes find that the financing of DRAMA NO. "Y" is heavier than they can afford, and are planning to join their forces with other Classes--two or three Classes, for instance, taking the DRAMA between them. This is quite agreeable to us. However, the Society does not wish to sell the Parts separately, but would rather recommend that the whole outfit be ordered together, and handled on a partnership basis. In addition to costing less for each Class, it will require fewer operators from each Class.

Incidentally, we urge that the speaking Elders of the Classes do not neglect the home service. Younger brethren, not used at all to speaking, and some sisters, make very acceptable operators for the DRAMA. The speaking Elders might follow the DRAMA, giving Chart Talks, etc.

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REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you."--Matthew 5:11,12.

THESE words of our Lord are addressed to His disciples--not merely His Apostles, who were chosen to be His special messengers, but all His followers throughout this Age. A disciple is a pupil--one who is being taught by another. All who are Jesus' disciples are to take the message of our text to themselves. "Blessed are ye," signifies that persecution is a favor from God. Consider it as a favor from the Father when men shall revile you--not because of the reviling, but because they shall say these things of you falsely, for Christ's sake.

No one would choose naturally to be persecuted or to have evil spoken against him. The Scriptures say that a good name is more to be esteemed than great riches. But if it is for Christ's sake that we suffer, we may know that the Lord will recompense us. In the Lord's arrangement there is to be a time of "evening up" for all we suffer here. Thus we lay up treasure in Heaven. All that we suffer now is storing up for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if borne for Him.

From this standpoint we should really desire persecution. We are not to strive for it, not to endeavor to bring it upon ourselves unnecessarily; but realizing that if we lack persecution we lack one of the evidences of being true disciples of the Lord, we rejoice when in the providence of God it is our portion. Some, it is true, might be reviled for something evil or unwise that they had done. There would be no blessing in such an experience. The blessing comes when the accusation against us is false and is for the Truth's sake.

"All who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Hence we should investigate our lives to see whether we have this evidence that we are living godly. The Lord is the "True Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We are the lesser lights. In letting our lights shine faithfully, we shall bring upon ourselves persecution. Let us not imagine that escape from persecution in our own case is the result of superior wisdom or tact on our part. "All who will live godly shall suffer persecution," is the promise, the assurance of Scripture. We should not court it, but should desire this evidence of our faithfulness, and should wish to be one of the "blessed" ones, of whom the Master speaks in our text. Then let us ask ourselves, Do I have persecution for Christ's sake? We should make a prayerful examination of our hearts to see whether we are fully loyal to God, to see whether we are letting our light shine out properly. If we lack this proof of sonship, we should inquire, What is the reason?

PERSECUTION A SURE RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS

A sister once said to the Editor, "I have no persecution, no opposition. Everything seems to be going favorably

with me." She seemed troubled. We asked the sister to study her own heart to see whether or not she was as faithful as she knew how to be. Upon her reply we said, "Probably you take your persecutions with such grace that you are happy under them." The sister replied that she would be happy if she thought that was the case. Then we told her that the only other explanation we could think of was that the Lord was allowing her time to gain strength in order that she might bear what would come to her later. We told her to pray about it. A year or two after we again saw the sister. We recalled the circumstance, and asked her if she had yet had any persecution. She answered, "Oh, yes. I have had plenty of persecution, but I am happy and rejoicing in it!"

It is impossible to rejoice in persecution until we get the right focus on the subject. We cannot do this of ourselves, and need, therefore, to take the matter to the Lord and confer with Him. After we have had "a little talk with Jesus," our faith takes hold on Him. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to be exceeding glad and joyful in persecution and affliction for Christ. The Apostle Peter also declares, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as...an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters; yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him glorify God on this behalf."--1 Peter 4:14,15.

The Master was not surprised at the attitude of the chief priests and religious leaders of His day. He knew from the beginning that he would have their opposition and hostility, and He warned His disciples not to expect otherwise. As to the reason why there should be persecution against the Lord and those who faithfully follow in His footsteps, He himself tells us, saying, "The darkness hateth the light." Darkness stands for Satan, for sin, for everything contrary to righteousness. God is represented as the great light, "and in Him is no darkness at all." Light is healing, beneficial, health-giving.

They who are of the darkness hate those who are of the light, because the light reproves the darkness, and the darkness does not like to be reprov'd. Wherever righteousness

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is, it is a rebuke to that which is sinful, dark. Our Lord stood for the light. He represented the Truth, the Heavenly Father. And those who were in darkness were in opposition to Him in proportion to their darkness --some of these knowingly, others in more or less of ignorance. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all them which believe not." Satan has been skilful in putting darkness for light and light for darkness.

IN GOOD CONSCIENCE MANY HAVE OPPOSED LIGHT

The fact that many of the world are in opposition to God and righteousness is not because as a rule they are evil of heart, but because Satan has succeeded in making the darkness seem desirable and the light undesirable. It was thus in the religious systems of Jesus' day, and we believe that it is the same in the religious systems of today. Saul of Tarsus was for a time one of those blinded by Satan. In persecuting the followers of Jesus he verily believed that he was doing God service. But when he was apprehended by the Lord and the light was revealed to him, he proved himself loyal to God.

And so we trust it is with some who today oppose the light and truth now being proclaimed. They are deluded; but if their hearts are fully loyal to the Lord, if they are true to their consecration vows, the Truth will be revealed to them before "the door is shut"; for "ye, brethren, are not in darkness; ye are the children of light." "The wise shall understand." Soon the knowledge of the Truth will come to the "foolish virgins," and they will wash their soiled robes in the blood of Christ--during the great tribulation shortly to come to the whole world. And soon, too, the light of the knowledge of God is to fill the whole earth. But so long as Satan is "the Prince of this world," and there are those in the world who have his spirit, and those who are followers of the Lord and have His spirit, just so long must there be conflict.

The opposition of the darkness to the light may be manifested in different ways. In the days of our Lord and the Apostles there were persecutions of Christians by Jews. Later, during the long centuries in which the Word of God was neglected and the Truth was obscured by gross errors, there were persecutions of Protestants by Catholics and of Catholics by Protestants and of Jews by both--all because of failure to study the Word of God and to follow its teachings. But very few in these dark times had access to the Word.

Some of the opposition to our Lord was open, and some of it was hidden. Many of the Apostles, like their Master, suffered death by violence; and many of the faithful down through the Gospel Age have suffered violent deaths. At the present time, outward persecution is not sanctioned by law, nor is it tolerated to any great extent.

PRESENT METHODS OF PERSECUTION

Persecutors have all along used the weapon of reviling, slander, saying all manner of evil falsely against those who are God's true people. As the Bible declares, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Today slanderous charges are made and villainous, opprobrious expressions indulged in by opponents of the Truth, and this is the chief weapon, because the defamers have not the power at present to use open, personal violence. Public sentiment and law would not permit it. But the persecution is of the same brand, the same spirit --merely governed by circumstances and conditions.

Those who would say all manner of evil falsely, knowing the charges are false, are the very kind who would crucify or burn at the stake, had they the power. Not being permitted to use personal violence by the present laws and the general sentiment, these are forced to content themselves with bringing all sorts of false charges--seeking to assassinate the reputation and destroy the influence of those who are proclaiming the Truth, the Word of God.

The right attitude of the persecuted ones is indicated in our text. Instead of feeling downcast and discouraged by these experiences, and thinking them strange, evidences that God is against us, we should conclude the very reverse. We should say to ourselves, "This is the same kind of experience that the Lord had, and that His people of the past have had." So, "Marvel not if the world [especially the religious world--the world that hated Him] hate you. Ye know that it hated Me before it hated you," forewarned our Master. So far from being discouraged, we are to rejoice--not that any could rejoice in the persecution for its own sake, for persecution is grievous; but we are to rejoice because "great is your reward in Heaven." What we do not get here of prosperity, we shall get there--in the Kingdom.

The Socialists say that they intend to have some of the good things now! They have not sufficient faith in the future blessings to be willing to wait. But the class addressed in our text are those who have faith in God and His promises, those who are associated with Christ, who understand that the experiences of this time are working out for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and they are content to await God's time. These are rejoicing in their hearts, realizing that they are enduring for righteousness' sake, that they are on the side of God, the side of right, the side of Truth, and realizing that these afflictions are only momentary, as it were; for the present life is but a mere span compared with the eternal life, the glorious immortality, so near at hand, in which we shall receive the blessings promised--joy forever with the Lord.

"FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED"

The Master gave all His followers fair warning that they were not to expect the world to appreciate their attitude. One might well reason that if one gave up sin and adopted a righteous course, the world would esteem him; that all would see the worthiness of his character and would show him special deference. But we must not expect this under the present reign of Sin. It would be a very broad way into the Kingdom, and a great many then might take this course for the favor of man, for the prosperity which it would bring them. The Lord could never demonstrate our fitness for the Kingdom honors under such conditions.

If our great Master was called Beelzebub, we cannot expect that the members of His Household will be treated

any better. If He who was perfect was held up to scorn as the Prince of Devils, we may expect similar treatment to be meted out to His followers by those whom the Adversary has blinded; for we are less able to uphold the standard of righteousness than was He. When His enemies attempted to make His character appear vile in the sight of others, He did not retaliate. Jesus did on proper occasions point out the wrong-doing, the wrong character, of those who were the religious leaders and teachers; but He did not do this in a retaliatory sense. On various occasions He accused them of being untrue, unholy, hypocritical; but He said nothing with a view to injuring them, but with the desire to show them their improper condition of heart, that they might profit by His instruction. He endeavored to help others to see the real condition of these blind leaders of the blind, in order to prevent them from falling into the ditch toward which their leaders were hastening.

THE MASTER'S CRUCIAL TEST

When the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law tried to trump up charges against the Master and

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to put evil constructions upon what He said, He was patient under all these trying conditions. He submitted to the treatment. It might be asked, Why did God permit His Holy Son to suffer such revilings? Why did He not smite down those who did so wickedly? The answer is that the Father wished to demonstrate the kind of character that was pleasing to Him, and He wished to test the loyalty of Jesus Himself. Would He be submissive and obedient or would He resent these affronts? Would He say, "I will have none of this! I did not come into the world to bear such indignities"? His painful experiences were thus tests of His loyalty to the Father.

Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that He should submit Himself, even unto death, and He had agreed to do this. Now the crucial test was: Would He continue loyal to the Father and carry out His purposes? If so, He would be worthy to be the Messiah, worthy to be the Divine Son of God throughout eternity. Our Lord's experiences had all been foretold in prophecy. In order to fulfil these prophecies it must be that He receive revilings, and He must accept them properly. The Apostle Peter shows that in this He was a worthy Example to all of His followers. As He who was holy, harmless, undefiled, did not seek to have the Father bring upon the revilers some punishment for their misdoings, so this is an example for us; so we should walk in His steps.

SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION STILL HERE

We realize that in our case there is none righteous,

not one who is perfect. So we see that our enemies might have some cause to revile us. They might see some of our imperfections and have something that they could pick at and exaggerate. The Apostle Peter says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." As they said all manner of evil against our Lord falsely, we may be sure that they will say all manner of evil falsely against us. And as He bore it patiently, so are we to take patiently everything that comes to us, and to recognize that nothing can possibly happen to us except what the Father will foreknow and permit for our good and for His glory. Our Master left us a portion of His cup that the Father poured for Him. After the cup has all been drained, then will come the glory and the honor--but not now.

We might naturally expect under the changed conditions of the present day, that those who are loyal to God and His Truth would not be maltreated and persecuted as in Jesus' day. But we believe there is another way of viewing the matter. We believe that Jesus, if He were here in the flesh today, would be persecuted and maligned by the worldly-minded, especially in the nominal Church systems. Now, instead of crucifying Him literally, or roasting Him at the stake, they would "roast" Him before the public--a more refined form of persecution--for the spirit of persecution is still here.

In proportion as the followers of Jesus are faithful to the teachings of the Master, in that same proportion they will be out of harmony with everything opposed to the spirit of Christ, and in that same proportion they will be misrepresented and persecuted. In Jesus' day there were plenty of people who did reverence to the Doctors of the

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Law, who made broad their phylacteries and were very exact as to the letter of the Law, the paying of tithes, etc. Jesus did not seek honor and high position. But He appealed to the people to turn from sin, to walk in His steps, to stand for the Truth as against all unrighteousness and untruth. This appeal touched no responsive chord in the hearts of the worldly-minded.

For this reason, we say that the world has not changed, that the world is still in opposition to the Word and its spirit--particularly the religious world. It is still true, however, as in the days of our Lord in the flesh, that the common people are inclined to hear the Gospel gladly, if not blinded by the religious leaders. But today, as in Jesus' time, many are influenced by the false representations of those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual shepherds. If then the world should come to be in sympathy with us as a people, and should speak well of us, and we should become popular, we should come under the condemnation expressed in the Master's words, "Woe unto you when all men speak well

of you; for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

THINK IT NOT STRANGE

If, on the contrary, we find that in spite of our best endeavors we are beset by opposition, and are viewed with suspicion, if unworthy constructions are placed upon our unselfish efforts to do good and to carry to others the glorious light which has so blessed our own hearts, let us not be surprised or feel aggrieved; for undoubtedly it is for the same reason that Jesus was opposed.

The spirit of light is the spirit of Christ. The spirit of darkness is of the world. All who have sympathy for that which is evil, or have been so blinded that light appears as darkness, will oppose the light. There has been so much of selfishness in the world, and the people have been so often taken advantage of and duped, that we cannot wonder that they are slow to believe that there are any who can be actuated solely by the motive of blessing their fellows.

It will be to the interest of some to promote priestcraft, and they will, therefore, seek to break down whatever is inimical to their interests. They say, "You are opposing us." We reply that we are only holding up the light. But they feel that the light that is reaching the people is undermining their influence. We believe that this is the secret of much of the strong opposition to the Truth that is prevailing in some quarters. There is a large number, we believe, who in many respects are good men, but who are fighting the light. We may suppose that they do not realize what they are doing--that unwittingly they are holding on to the ignorance of error, in bondage to Sin and Satan. For this reason they are in antagonism to those who are lifting the veil from before the Lord's people and showing them the character of God, that He is Love. Hence the conflict which is going on.

Another phase of opposition is in respect to financial matters. When we claim that what is given to the Lord should not be obtained by cajoling the people, should not be pulled out of them, worked out of them, extorted from them, but that whatever is given should be a free will, voluntary offering, we are running counter to the custom of centuries. As one Baptist minister said to two of our brethren, "Think of Pastor Russell's advertising 'Seats free and no collections!' Where would we be if we did not have collections, or if the people got the thought that it is not the proper thing to pass the collection baskets?"

THE REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE SOON TO VANISH

As our Master was hated without a cause, so let this be our experience, as far as possible. Let us see to it that the hatred, the malice, the envy and spirit of murder which is heaped upon us is entirely undeserved. Let it be our earnest endeavor that our lives, as fully as we are able, shall reflect the light of the Truth, shall be as noble

and upright as possible in all things; that our words and actions shall glorify the Lord whom we serve, and be eloquent of our love for all mankind, especially for the Household of Faith, whether enlightened by Present Truth as yet or not.

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In a very little while, we believe, we shall be glorified with our Lord, if faithful. Then a new Dispensation will be inaugurated; and those who hate us now, chiefly because blinded and misled by the Adversary, will bow their hearts before us as the Anointed of the Lord, and we shall have the blessed privilege of uplifting them, of enlightening and forgiving them, of helping them to attain the perfect image and likeness of our God.

HOW FAR ARE OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED?

The question might arise with some, To what extent does God supervise the experiences of His children? The Master said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" Then how would it be with our cup? Is God not also our Father? Are not we members of Christ? Who, then, but the Father pours our cup? But we know that God is not a participator in any evil thing: how, then, has He anything to do with the evils that come to His people?

We answer, There are all manner of evil forces and influences surrounding us. These evil influences are of Satan and the fallen angels. "Our Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and the fallen angels also go about seeking how they may assault the children of the Lord. But they can have no power whatever against us except as the Father shall permit it. He will permit no evil influence to touch us to our injury as New Creatures, if we keep close to Him. And He will prevent harm or injury to our persons, unless he sees it will outwork good to us, if we are rightly exercised by it.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR OUR GOOD

We have also the opposition of the world. But Satan, the Prince of this world, succeeds in blinding the minds of men, putting error for Truth, and darkness for light, in order to make the way of righteousness and obedience to God appear foolish and undesirable and extreme. Those who have more or less of the spirit of the world bring against the Lord's children in a perfectly natural way, aside from the direct influence of the Evil One and his cohorts, a certain amount of opposition. For instance, our Lord, as the time of His death drew near, was speaking to the Apostles about the great climax of His experiences --that He would go up to Jerusalem, that men would crucify Him, etc. Then Peter said, Lord, Lord, do not

allow your mind to run in this channel! You have come to earth to be the great King! Do not let the thought get into your mind that you are to be crucified! And the Lord turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind Me, adversary!" He was the Lord's adversary for the time.

So the world often become adversaries of the children of God in their zeal for what they think the more honorable and advantageous course for us. They urge, Do not take such an extreme view of things, and you will get along better. This is opposition to our consecration vow; and when we resist their well-meant efforts, they seek to thwart us and to bring us back to their views and ideas. The ideal of the world for us as Christians would be, Do good, and work for social uplift, for civic reform; build hospitals, establish orphanages, etc.; but do not spend so much time studying that old Bible, or they will call you an extremist or a heretic. So the world tries sympathetically to influence us. And our Father permits these influences to be brought to bear upon us for our proving. We may be sure that the Lord so supervises our experiences that nothing can come to us in any way whatsoever but what will work for our spiritual good so long as we keep ourselves in His love--so long as we wholly abide in Him. And death itself is powerless to touch us until God's time for us shall have come.

Our flesh is our constant, ever-present adversary. It tries to say, No, no! Do not carry this thing so far! Our flesh is inclined to be in harmony with the world. But our New Creature replies, Jesus walked the way of sacrifice and suffering--and St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John. Then the flesh suggests that they were special persons. But we know that the Bible teaches us that the same course is to be followed by all of the Lord's faithful people, and that all these will receive persecution.-- 2 Timothy 3:12.

All will not be crucified, nor will all be thrust in a caldron of boiling oil or be sawn asunder or beheaded. We shall probably not have any of these experiences; but we must suffer. So we bid our flesh be silent, and we rejoice in the experiences that we do have; for "if we suffer [with Him], we shall reign with Him." (2 Timothy 2:12.) Of course we rejoice! And the world says that we are going insane!

THE PRECIOUS PROMISES OUR STRENGTH

We are to remember, dear brethren--and this is to be a parting thought with us--that nothing can by any means harm us, aside from our Father's will. We are promised that not one hair of our heads shall be hurt--figuratively. And we have the guarantee from the Lord that "all things shall work together for good to those that love God," who put their trust in Him. Whatever would not be a blessing to us will not be permitted. Our trials and tribulations, rightly received, are to work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."--2 Cor. 4:17,18.

As we look back, we can see that all who have walked in the narrow way have received persecution. Whoever has been in accord with God has been out of accord with the course of this world. There were the Baptists, and then the Methodists, who in the early days had persecution because they had more light than others. The Presbyterians also for a time, because they had greater light than others, received persecution.

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THE NIGHT ALMOST OVER

And we must expect the same today. Persecution will come to those who have the courage of their convictions. The Lord tells us that the anointing that we have received of Him is for the very purpose that we may show forth His praises. (1 Peter 2:9.) We must examine ourselves to see if to any extent we have kept our light under a bushel. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews, St. Paul recounts the sufferings of the Prophets and worthies of old. Some of them were stoned to death, some sawn asunder; they were killed and persecuted in a variety of ways. These godly men endured much for righteousness' sake. "And all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

But the night is almost over. Soon the Lord will rise up. He will stretch forth His hands--His Power--and His children shall be delivered. Soon will come the glorious Reign of Messiah. Then all who will live righteously shall have peace. Altogether, dear friends, our text is very precious--one that should encourage our hearts and help to guide us on our way, and bring us comfort and rejoicing in these closing days of our pilgrimage.

"Our God is love; He loves to hear our voices;
In Christ we share the riches of His grace;
He loves to fold His arms of comfort round us,
And let us nestle in the children's place.

"He loves to answer prayer, though not it may be
In just the way that we should think the best;
But in His own prospective, perfect judgment
He gives the blessings and withholds the rest."

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JEHOVAH'S ABIDING PRESENCE WITH HIS PEOPLE

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

THE children of Israel had come out of Egypt; they had crossed the Red Sea, and had come to Mount Sinai. Moses had gone up into the Mount, had received the tables of the Law, and had come down and found the nation in idolatry, worshipping the golden calf which they had made. While Moses was still in the Mount, the Lord had told him that Israel had already turned aside from the true God to idols, and was offering sacrifice to a molten calf as the god who had brought them forth out of Egypt; and He instructed Moses to go down to the people. The wrath of God was hot against them, and He proposed to Moses that He consume them and make of him a great nation. But Moses besought the Lord for Israel, and the Lord was entreated of him and spared the nation from annihilation, and promised him that he should still be their leader.

Then Moses went down from the Mount. He realized that Israel had grievously sinned, and his anger was kindled against them. He cast down the tables of the Law, which were in his hands, and broke them, when he saw and heard the dancing and feasting and shouting around the idol which they had set up for themselves. Here was a nation delivered by God from Egyptian bondage. The Red Sea had opened for them to pass over, by the power of Jehovah. They had also received various blessings along their way, notable proofs of Divine guidance. Yet in spite of all this, here was rebellion and idolatry! What could he expect of a people who had so little appreciation of God, that they were quickly turned aside? Even Moses' own brother, Aaron, led astray by the insistence of the people, felt it necessary to co-operate with them in the making of the golden calf.

Then Moses took the calf which they had made, and burned it in fire, ground it to powder, scattered it upon the water and compelled the children of Israel to drink of it. He reproved Aaron, and then stood in the gate of the camp and said to all the people, "Who is on Jehovah's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men."--Exodus 32:26-28.

MOSES' CRY AND ITS ANSWER

The day following, Moses explained to the people how great was the sin of which they had been guilty and told them that he would go to the Lord in prayer, if peradventure he might make atonement for their sin. Then he went to the Lord in earnest supplication, pleading that if God

would not forgive His people, He would also blot out his name from His book. But God answered, "Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book." He promised to send His angel before Moses, but assured him that He was not yet through dealing with Israel for their iniquity. He instructed Moses to tell them of their stiffneckedness and to command them in His name to put off their ornaments, that He might know what course He would pursue with them.

The people obeyed God. They laid aside their ornaments, and humbled themselves and worshipped the Lord. Moses, heavy of heart, felt that unless God would in some special way give him the necessary wisdom and grace for the great task of leading so perverse a people into the inheritance which the Lord had promised them if they would serve Him, he would be utterly insufficient for the undertaking. So he again appealed to God in earnest prayer. He told Him of his trepidation and his earnest desire for His sustaining help and His presence with him in all the way, pleading, This is too great a work for me!

Then the Lord assured Moses that He would go with him, that he should have His presence throughout the entire journey to the Promised Land; for he had found grace in His sight. He said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Moses then besought the Lord, "Show me Thy glory." It was here that God put Moses into the cleft of a rock and covered him with His hand while He passed by and let Moses see His glory from behind, saying, "No man can see My face and live."

When God speaks of His presence with His servants we are not to think of His being with them in His bodily presence, but by His Spirit and through His angelic messengers, sustaining, blessing and guiding them. He protects them from whatever will harm them. He watches over their every interest and tenderly cares for them.

IDEA OF GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE AN ERROR

It is a common, but erroneous, thought that God is actually present in person everywhere. We do not understand the Scriptures to so teach. This generally prevailing error that God is everywhere present in person, and at the same time, has led many to think of Him as being not a person at all, but merely an influence. We understand the Bible presentation of the matter to be that God has a personal, bodily presence, aside from the power and influence which He exerts; and that He has a central seat of government, where He resides.

"Heaven is My Throne, the earth is My footstool," says Jehovah. The One who has His seat in Heaven and whose footstool is the earth is a great God! But this is, of course, a forceful figure of speech, showing His all-embracing power and control. God does not actually sit in a certain part of His Universe and have His literal feet in another part. The language of Scripture accommodates itself to the mind of man, and speaks of God as

if He possessed the same bodily members as humanity. But actually we know not what a spirit body is like. "It doth not yet appear," even to the saints of the Lord who are still in the flesh.

We understand that the bodily presence of Jehovah is in Heaven. Everything in the Bible teaches us that He is very great--infinite in power. We read that "the Lord looketh down from Heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of His habitation He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth." (Psalm 33:13,14.) He has beheld men in their distress, and has provided for their deliverance "in due time." But we should clearly distinguish between this thought of God's looking down from Heaven and the thought that He is personally present on earth. We can see a mile off, or five miles off, by the power of our sight. We can be a hundred or more feet away and be present by the power of our voice; or aided by the modern invention of the telephone, we can be present by our voice several hundred miles away. In that sense of the word the Lord is present everywhere throughout His mighty Universe, and His power can be exerted everywhere. He has means by which He can be cognizant of all earthly affairs and of matters pertaining to all His great domain.

We have these powers only to a very limited extent. The telegraph, the telephone, the telescope, etc., are all means by which our presence, power and influence are extended to a certain degree; but our powers are limited to this small planet, except as we further extend them by means of prayer, and thus set in motion influences whose

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extent we are not now able to fathom. But this latter privilege is only for a few at present. Not many thus have access to the Power which controls the Universe. And these who have the privilege of coming to the mighty King of Heaven may come only in His appointed way, subject to the conditions which He has made.

We can place no limitations upon the power of Jehovah. The inventions of this Time of the End, which have increased our powers of communication, and so have united all parts of the globe, give us but a very faint conception of the infinite powers of the Almighty God. These inventions, we believe, will continue to increase and multiply through the incoming Age, thus adding more and more to the powers and blessings of mankind. These will give mankind a greater and greater appreciation of the majesty, glory and might of their Creator as they come to know Him as He is and to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Yet no human mind, even in perfection, will be able to comprehend the Mighty Maker of the Universe.

GOD'S GUIDANCE THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

So God promised Moses that His presence, His power

and sustaining grace should go with him all the way. He wished Him to understand that he was not to perform his great work alone, without all-sufficient backing. "I will be with you," was the promise. The Lord's presence was indeed with the children of Israel in a very marked manner --continually with them from the time they crossed the Red Sea, guiding by blessings or by chastisements, as they should need. He was with them in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, and by His presence in the Shekinah glory which covered the Mercy-seat in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle. After the Tabernacle was set up by God's instruction, these manifestations of His presence, His power and His watchful care never failed. The pillar of cloud and of fire guided their journeyings; and when these rested, it was an indication from God that they were to abide where they were until the pillar of cloud or fire again moved from its place.

Moses had said to the Lord, "If Thy presence go not with us, send us not up hence"--this is too great a task for any man to accomplish alone. But if Thy presence will continue with us, if I can be shown Thy will and be continually directed by Thee, then I will be able to lead this people through the wilderness journey to the land of Canaan. Frequently the Lord spoke to Moses through the Tabernacle. Thus we see that the promise of His presence with him was fulfilled. The Lord gave him rest. He lived to be one hundred and twenty years old, yet was not his strength impaired nor his eye dim. We remember that there was a time when Moses realized that the work of judging the people was too great for him. He took the matter to the Lord, and seventy judges were then chosen to share his burden. The matters that were too difficult for them they brought to Moses. He went to God with all his difficulties and burdens and he had continual blessing.

THE LESSON TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

The experiences of Natural Israel have very important lessons for Israel according to the Spirit. A people originally a part of the world, we have been invited to come out from the world and to journey to a new Country, to come into a Heavenly inheritance. We are marching toward the glorious Kingdom promised us if we are faithful. There are trials and difficulties along the way. But our God has promised us, as He promised Moses His servant, that His presence shall go with us. Sometimes He seems to withdraw from us and to leave us to ourselves; but He does not really do so. He tests our loyalty and our faith in Him by withholding the sense of His presence at times.

Shall we, then, like Israel of old, conclude that God is no more with us, and turn again to the gods we formerly worshiped--gods of wealth or of pleasure, gods worshiped by the nations around us? Shall we give ourselves up to revelry, worldly merry-making and sin? Shall we forget all the way by which our God has led us, all the great

deliverances which the past of our lives have recorded? Shall anything--either "tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, or any other thing in creation, be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?" Surely not!

The closer we live to the Lord, and the greater our faith, the more we shall realize the Divine direction, and the more we shall make use of the means He has provided for our strengthening and upholding. We may call upon Him in time of trouble; we may go to Him in prayer; and He never fails those who put their trust in Him and earnestly seek to walk in His appointed way. This being true, we may go forth upon our journey in perfect trust and confidence. Having consecrated our all to the Lord, we are to seek for His guidance, for His presence is with us, in all the affairs of our life.

Few have such mighty burdens to carry as Moses had. But all of God's children have burdens to bear, and important responsibilities are resting upon each of us who have taken upon us the vows of our God. Each member of the Body of Christ, the true Israel of God, is privileged to have the continual guidance of the Lord in every experience of our wilderness journey. Heavenly Manna is furnished for our daily sustenance. The Water of Life flows out to us for our daily refreshing, from the smitten Rock of Ages. Our Father's chastening rod restrains us when we are in danger, or when we wander into any forbidden path. How lovingly He brings us back into the right way, and heals our wounds, and graciously forgives our stumblings and weaknesses! Surely we may have implicit confidence in our Heavenly Guide. Thus we may rest in Him and be kept in perfect peace. Our hearts can truly exclaim with the poet:

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

"There is light for me on the trackless wild
As the wonders of old I trace,
When the God of the whole earth went before
To search me a resting place!
Hath He changed for me? Nay, He changeth not;
He will bring me by some new way,
Through fire and flood and each crafty foe,
As safely as yesterday."

He who so faithfully cared for Israel after the flesh, who were a perverse and fickle people, will surely care more abundantly for His true, Spiritual Israel, who love

Him supremely and are daily seeking more fully to know His will that they may do it.

The Apostle Paul, in warning Spiritual Israel not to fall after the same example of unbelief of Natural Israel, and thus lose their hold on the Lord, says, "We who have believed do enter into rest." (Hebrews 4:3.) It was unbelief that led to the disobedience and perversity of Israel after the flesh, and that led to their final rejection by the Lord as His favored people, to whom should apply the most precious promises. They have lost forever as a nation the special place of favor which was theirs by inheritance. What a lesson this should be to Spiritual

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Israel! And yet we see that today the great mass of Spiritual Israel are falling "after the same example of unbelief." And they, too, will lose the chief place of favor, which was offered them when it was taken from unbelieving Natural Israel. Only a faithful "remnant" of both Natural and Spiritual Israel will gain the great inheritance held out to them by the Lord.

THE GLORIOUS INHERITANCE OF SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Those who prove faithful during the present Dispensation shall inherit the most precious things which God has to offer, the secret things which were for ages kept hidden, but are now revealed to the true saints of God. The faithful of past ages shall inherit the earth as rulers and princes over mankind, during the glorious Reign of Messiah. Gathered to these will be Natural Israel then living. They shall have a rich heritage. What remains for them in the ages of glory to follow, we may not know with certainty, but it will be a blessed portion, we may be sure.

The faithful of the present Age have been raised to "sit in Heavenly places with Christ Jesus"--"the Lion of the tribe of Judah." These faithful ones are the twelve tribes of Israel who are to reign with Him. These--only a Little Flock, in all 144,000--are of the faithful remnant of Natural Israel, who were gathered at the beginning of this Gospel Age, and the faithful remnant from the Gentile Church of this Age. (Revelation 7:4-8; 14:1-5.) These have "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," and which none others can know. "My peace I give unto you," whispers the Master to these. We have a rest of faith now; and we are assured that we who have entered into this rest shall in due time, if we faint not, enter into the complete "rest that remaineth for the people of God." This rest we shall enter into when we experience our glorious "change" in the First Resurrection, when we are transformed in body and made like our Lord, and shall see and know as we are now seen and known of God. We shall then be blessed with the exceeding glory which He has promised--immortality, His own nature--and a seat with our Savior in His Throne.

The God of Israel is indeed ever present with His true people. He never forgets us, but is constantly looking out for our interests, guarding us in every time of danger, providing for our every need, both temporal and spiritual, whatever is best for the interest of the New Creature.

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He reads every thought of our hearts; He marks every impulse of devotion and love to Him; He shapes all the influences surrounding our lives for our disciplining and refining, and hearkens to our every cry for aid and comfort and sympathy and fellowship with Him. He is never for even a moment forgetful or off guard. "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." (Psalm 121.) If we call Him in the busy hours of the day, or in the silent watches of the night, He is near to uphold and sustain and protect, whether we can realize His presence at all times or not.

How blessed the assurance of such constant, abiding care and faithfulness! No real child of God is devoid of these evidences of his precious relationship to the Father --the God of Israel. And the saints who have been called with the Heavenly Calling, and are faithfully responding, are His true Israel in the highest sense, heirs of all His choicest promises. How goodly a heritage is ours!

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THE ANOINTING OF THE CHURCH

"The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you."--1 John 2:27.

UNDER the Divine arrangement with the nation of Israel their high priests, who represented the entire priesthood, were inducted into office by an anointing with a peculiar kind of rich perfume called the holy anointing oil. This oil was made according to a special prescription, and the people were not permitted to use it, upon penalty of death. After Israel had become a kingdom, the kings were also anointed with this holy anointing oil.

These two offices of priest and king were afterwards shown to be typical of a united service which would find its antitype in One who was to be a Priest upon His Throne--a Royal Priest, a Priestly King. The Scriptures give us a type of this united office in the person of Melchizedek, of whom it is written that he was king of Salem and priest of the Most High God. (Genesis 14:18-20; Hebrews 7:1-17.) By thus comparing Scripture with Scripture we learn that Messiah, who is to accomplish

the great work of blessing the world, is to be the One who will combine the offices of both king and priest.

Examining the type closely, we find that the holy anointing oil was poured upon the head of the high priest only at the time of his induction into office. Poured liberally upon his head, the oil ran down to the very skirts of his priestly robes of office. As we shall see later, this circumstance was also typical.

Looking forward from the type to the antitype, we perceive the Scriptures to teach that there is to be established in the earth a great Messianic Kingdom, which will bind Satan, restrain all evil influences and give the whole world of mankind a full opportunity of reconciliation with God. We also understand that there will be done a great priestly work in connection with this Kingdom. This also will be a part of Messiah's great work, which is thus shown to be twofold; as King He will rule mankind with a rod of iron for their blessing, and as Priest He will instruct, uplift, heal their diseases and awaken the dead.

"CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY"

The nation of Israel well understood that their Messiah was to be the promised Seed of Abraham, who was to bless all the families of the earth; but not until the time of our Lord's First Advent was it due to be understood that this Seed was to consist of more than one individual. The Apostle Paul calls our attention to this fact and declares that this was the Mystery hidden from previous dispensations--that the Messiah was to be, not an individual, but a company under one Headship. (Ephesians 3:2-7; Colossians 1:25-27.) Furthermore, this Messiah is not only to be multitudinous, but is to be gathered from amongst many nations.

Only a few can understand this Mystery; many do not comprehend it yet; in fact, it is to be understood only by a special class, for whom it is designed. The Scriptures show us that the Gospel Age is set aside for the selection of this great antitypical King, greater than Solomon; this great antitypical Royal Priest, represented by Melchizedek. The call of this Age is for those who shall become members of this company, the antitypical Priest and King.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

All who would become members of this Kingdom class must look to our Lord Jesus as the One through whom the favor of God is to come to them. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under Heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." Since the death and resurrection of Christ a new way to life has been opened up. Christ will be the Head of the Church which is His Body; and the entire Church will complete the great antitypical Prophet, Priest and King--the long expected Seed of Abraham.--Galatians 3:8,16,29.

Therefore let all who have offered themselves to God in consecration take up the cross and follow the Master; let them live as nearly as possible the life that He lived, walking in His steps. While we cannot be perfect according to the flesh, and while God cannot approve anything imperfect, yet our perfection is to be that of intention, of will; and thus through the Redeemer shall we approve ourselves unto Him.

Reverting to the typical picture of the anointing of the Jewish high priest at the time of his induction into office and comparing it with the antitype, we perceive that the great antitypical Priest was anointed at Jordan. There our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Christ company, received the Holy Spirit without measure. At Pentecost the antitypical anointing oil began to flow down to the Church. As in the type the oil poured upon the head of the high priest flowed down to the very skirts of his garment, so the Holy Spirit has come down from the Head of the Church even to the last members of the anointed Body of Christ.--Psalm 133:1-3.

THE ENTIRE CHRIST COMPANY ANOINTED

We receive this anointing from the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. All things are of the Father and all things are by the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6.) The Father bestowed the Holy Spirit upon the Son, and authorized Him to bestow it upon His Body. This granting of the Holy Spirit was designed to be an anointing for the whole Body; for the Father recognized the Body when He recognized the Head. When Christ made imputation of His merit to cover the blemishes of the Church, He made us acceptable to the Father; and this acceptance was outwardly manifested by the tongues of fire, etc., which came upon the Apostles at Pentecost. This outward manifestation was not the most important thing, however; for the Apostles might have received the Holy Spirit without any special manifestation of Divine Power.

The tongues of fire which descended at Pentecost, like the dove which lighted upon our Lord at His baptism, did not continue to be seen. Both the dove and the flame of light were merely outward representations for the purpose of convincing the beholders that the promised blessing and power had come.

When Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, was received into the anointed company, there was another manifestation of the fact that the Holy Spirit had been given to the followers of Jesus. So there might be many manifestations of any fact. Even now God might give a manifestation to show that He had bestowed the Holy Spirit; but by so doing He would merely be indicating the fact--the Holy Spirit was already there. The anointing which the Church received at Pentecost was the Divine sanction, the Divine recognition, of those consecrated to follow in the

footsteps of our Lord. God thus gave outward demonstration of the fact that there was to be a Church.

Since Pentecost the same Gospel call has gone forth throughout all the world--to as many as the Lord our God doth call. (Acts 2:39.) Those who accept the terms and conditions of that call come into the anointed company. When we come into Christ, we come into this anointing. We do not get into the Body of Jesus, but we come into this symbolical Body of the Anointed--The Christ. We enter into this condition in which we are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" Jesus our Lord. Throughout this Gospel Age this anointing has continued in the Church. "The anointing which ye have received abideth in you"; it continues in you. Those who never come into this anointing will never be of the Church.

ANOINTING AND BEGETTING

As to how we may know that we have been begotten is another phase of the matter. At Pentecost when the Church began, there were outward signs by which this anointing was demonstrated--gifts of the Spirit, gifts of tongues, etc. These were merely outward gifts, the Apostle tells us, and might mean no more than tinkling cymbals or sounding brass. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3.) It might be that those having the gifts had merely come into relationship with God in an outward, formal way, and had made no real progress in spiritual things.

God's arrangement seems to be that after we have come into this anointed company and thus may from the very beginning speak and think of ourselves as the anointed class, there will by and by come a manifestation that we have really entered into this class. This evidence will not be by our speaking with tongues, etc., but by the appearance of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit--meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. The manifestation of these fruits would

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seem to mean that we were becoming more and more actuated by the Spirit of Christ.

But even here we must discriminate between the natural disposition and that acquired by growth in grace. For instance, there are those who have a great deal of patience--too much, in fact; they are indolent. Their patience, therefore, is not a fruit of the Spirit. In order to distinguish between natural traits and acquired graces we are to compare the person's natural disposition with his growth in grace and in the fruits of the Spirit.

The anointing of the Spirit is not altogether the same as the begetting of the Spirit. The anointing relates merely to the recognition as a member of a class called to a special work in the Messianic Kingdom. When we become related to God through Christ we become members of the anointed company. But while the anointing is represented

of the whole Church collectively, the begetting of the Holy Spirit is an individual matter. In various ways the Scriptures explain to us that we are begotten of the Holy Spirit by and through the Word of Truth.

SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE WORD OF TRUTH

In other words, no one can receive the Holy Spirit except he has received the Truth. As an illustration, Cornelius was a good man, who prayed much and gave alms liberally; all this, however, did not give him the Holy Spirit. But when the appropriate time came--the end of the seventy weeks of favor to the Jews--Cornelius was directed to one who would tell him what he ought to do. He was instructed by a holy angel to send for St. Peter to come to his house and to tell him words. (Acts 10:22.) Words were necessary.

In order to become members of the Church of Christ, there must be intelligent action on our part--it is not something of a hocus-pocus. We may know, therefore, that no heathen, however noble by nature, could possibly be of the Church class; and the same is true of people who are civilized. Whoever is to be of the anointed company must have a knowledge of the privilege of coming into relationship with God through Christ. If any one has not had this information, he cannot possibly be of the Church class.

It is the Word of God, the Gospel Message, that will bring people into relationship with God. So whoever will receive the Holy Spirit must first receive the knowledge of the Truth; and then this Truth will operate upon him. First he must take his stand for righteousness; next he must receive Christ as his Redeemer. Then, after having accepted Christ as his Savior, he must go forward and

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make a consecration of himself to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus. If he merely understood that this is the will of God, we believe that he would be received of the Lord--begotten of the Holy Spirit. Then it would be God's order that he receive more instruction, because he had taken the proper steps thus far.

THE PURPOSE OF THE ANOINTING

How much of this is done automatically we may not surely know. As the skilful human being operates largely along automatic lines, so the great Creator would doubtless have automatic lines along which to work; and one step would lead on to one result, and another step to another result, etc. Our supposition is that God has some great principle operating automatically by which, under Christ, all whom He would accept would receive certain blessings individually. As soon as the individual would take the required steps, he would realize the Divine blessing

and guidance in his affairs.

All of the anointed have the mind of the great Head of the Church. So we are to seek to abide in Christ individually as well as collectively; for as we have come into the anointed class, so it is possible for us to go out of that class. To abide in Christ, we must, as New Creatures, grow in grace, in knowledge and in love; for as New Creatures we shall, if faithful to the end of our course, be perfected in the First Resurrection, and sit in the Throne with our Lord and King.--Revelation 3:21.

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WHY GETHSEMANE'S AGONY?

--OCTOBER 18.--MARK 14:32-42.--

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."--MATTHEW 26:41.

FOLLOWING the institution of the Supper which memorializes His death, Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn, and then went out of the city to the Mount of Olives opposite --a distance of perhaps a mile. Apparently several important lessons were given to the disciples en route to Gethsemane. These St. John's Gospel records in Chapters 15-17.

The word Gethsemane signifies an oil press--a name that is full of significance. When we remember that the Jews used the oil of the olives both for food and for light, and that Jesus is the Nourisher as well as the Enlightener of the world, we see a special fitness in His having His trying experiences, which almost crushed His soul, in a garden used for the crushing of olives and the extraction of their oil.

Gethsemane was not a flower garden, but an olive orchard or garden. The supposed site is still carefully preserved, and guarded by Franciscan monks. In the Garden are some very ancient olive trees and one extremely old oak. The Garden is supposed to have belonged to some of Jesus' friends; and there is claimed to be some evidence that John Mark, the writer of the Gospel of St. Mark, was the lad who was awakened from his slumbers by the commotion incident to Jesus' arrest and who came forth in his nightgown.--Mark 14:51,52.

A NOTE OF WARNING

En route for Gethsemane, Jesus sought to impress upon his disciples the fact that they were entering a great crisis. He quoted to them the prophecy, "I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." (Zechariah 13:7.)

He said to them plainly that as a result they would all be offended--discouraged, stumbled, amazed. The thing that they were not expecting would occur.

St. Peter, full of confidence in his own devotion to the Lord, denied this, declaring that it would not be true in his case--that even though it should be true of all the others, he was ready to die with the Master, rather than to deny Him. Jesus still insisted that St. Peter was in great danger. He was trusting too much to his flesh, and not looking to God and prayerfully watching against temptation. Indeed, all the disciples joined in the same remonstrance against the accusation that Jesus had made. They declared themselves loyal and ready for death. How little they knew what severe trials would come upon them!

Surely there is a lesson here for all the followers of Jesus--today as well as then. It is right that we should feel ourselves thoroughly determined to be loyal to the Lord's Cause to our very last breath; for such a determination is very necessary to victory. The mistake made by many is in not realizing how severe the trials and temptations may become--in not realizing the necessity of Heavenly assistance in our every time of need. The Apostle wrote, "When I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Corinthians 12:10.) By this he doubtless meant, When fully loyal to the Lord, I feel my own weakness and insufficiency, but I am strong because then I rely especially upon Heavenly aid--then I watch and pray, and am thus forewarned against the temptations.

Doubtless in the end of this Age--in the closing days of this Gospel Dispensation--there will come Gethsemane experiences to the Church of Christ. Those who will stand those temptations and trials, and come off victorious, will be the ones whose faith and trust in the Lord are strong--those who watch and pray lest they enter into temptation, and who are thus safeguarded against it. As our Lord forewarned St. Peter and the other Apostles of their coming trial, so He has forewarned us of the great crucial test near at hand. Let us profit by the experiences of the Apostles recorded in this lesson.

"SORROWFUL EVEN UNTO DEATH"

Arrived at the Garden, Jesus left eight of the Apostles near the entrance, and went further into its shades with Peter, James and John. All were to watch, to be on guard against something that was to occur, something of which Jesus knew, but which seemed most improbable to the Apostles. They were unable to comprehend the Master's pessimism, even though they sympathized with Him.

It was midnight, and they were accustomed to retiring early. The strain of the evening, and the weighty lessons which the Master had imparted, reacted in drowsiness. They slept, instead of watching and praying. This was true even of the three nearest to the Master.

Wishing to be alone in His communion with the Father, Jesus went a stone's throw farther into the shades

by Himself. Time and again, in the agony which came upon Him, He came seeking human sympathy, only to find His dearest ones oblivious in sleep. Well had it been expressed by the Prophet, "Of the people there was none with me." (Isa. 63:3.) He trod the winepress of grief alone.

Not until He had finished giving admonitions to His Apostles and had left some to watch at the entrance of the garden, did the Master seem to give special thought to Himself and to the momentous events anticipated within a few hours. As He was leaving His favorite three, He gave utterance to the weight of oppression which seemed suddenly to rest down upon His soul. He exclaimed, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death!"--I feel as if I would die now, without coming to that great crisis which is before Me. We read that "He was greatly amazed and sore troubled." The Greek is

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equally strong, signifying utter amazement and sore trouble, carrying the thought of loneliness, home-sickness, friendlessness.

This feeling of wretchedness, despair, which suddenly came upon the Savior, continued for some time; for He went in prayer to the Father three times, petitioning that this hour might pass from Him, this terrible oppression which was breaking His heart. The Evangelist Luke, who was a physician, tells that the Master's distress was such that it brought on a bloody sweat. Although this record respecting the bloody sweat is not found in some of the older manuscripts, nevertheless physicians agree that such experiences have occurred to others in great distress.

THE CAUSE OF THE MASTER'S SORROW

How shall we explain the great distress of the Master in anticipation of His own death, of which He had knowledge in advance and of which He had told His disciples, assuring them also, as in this lesson, that He would arise from the dead on the third day? Why should the thought of death have so much more terror for the Redeemer than it has had for some of His followers, yes, than it has had for people in general?

Hundreds of martyrs have gone to deaths equally terrible or more so. Hundreds have exhibited great courage, fortitude, in the face of equally horrible deaths. How shall we account for this attitude of the Savior and His so earnestly praying that the hour or the cup might pass from Him?

In order to appreciate this question and its proper answer, we must remember how different was the Master from all the remainder of mankind. A death sentence rests upon all the world. We all know that it is merely a question of time when we shall die. We all know that the dying process can last but a few hours at most. Not only have we no hope of escaping death, but by reason

of being nine-tenths dead already our intelligent faculties are more or less benumbed. We are more or less reckless, careless, and proportionately fierce.

There are soldiers who will rush to battle in the face of instant death with apparently not a fear, and there are horses which will do the same thing. The greatest courage, however, is manifested by those who know, understand, appreciate fully, just what they are doing and who greatly fear death, but who notwithstanding press onward in obedience to the command of duty and of love. Jesus was such a soldier. He comprehended, as others had not comprehended, what death really is. He appreciated, as others did not appreciate, the meaning and value of life.

Jesus had left the Heavenly glory, divesting Himself of the higher nature on the spirit plane, exchanging it for the human nature, because man had sinned and because in the Divine purpose and arrangement He was to die, the Just for the unjust, as man's Redemption-price. This was the Father's will concerning Him. He tells us that for this purpose He came into the world. This thought dominated His entire life. Daily He was laying down His life, in doing the will of God and in serving humanity. Now He had come to the great climax.

The Heavenly Father had promised that if our Lord was faithful in this work given Him to do, He would be raised from the dead by Divine Power to the spirit plane of being and to a station still higher than He had before. He doubted not the Father's faithfulness in this matter, nor did he doubt the Father's Power. But the Father's provision and promise were conditional; only if our Lord would perform His part faithfully would He receive the resurrection to the higher life. If in any sense or degree, great or small, He should yield to sin, the penalty for sin would be upon Him--"Dying, thou shalt die."

For three and one-half years His life had been devoted to God and to the doing of the Divine will. The only question was, Had He done the Divine will fully, completely, and absolutely, in such a spirit as had been pleasing to the Heavenly Father? More than this, could He, would He, pass through the experiences of the next few hours with proper courage, proper faith, proper obedience; or would He fail, and lose His all in death?

NO ADVOCATE FOR THE MASTER

Thus we see how different it was with the Master from what it is with any of us who seek to walk in His steps. We have nothing to lose; for as a race we are all under sentence of death. Besides, the followers of Jesus realize that He was the Son of God who died for our sins, and that His merit compensates for our imperfections because we abide in Him and desire to do the Father's will.

But had the Master failed, there was no one to make good for Him. His failure meant everlasting death. Moreover, it meant the loss of all those special blessings which God had promised Him as a reward for special faithfulness.

It meant the loss of the great privilege of doing the Father's work in uplifting humanity from sin and death conditions through the Messianic Kingdom. In a word, the Master's personal eternal life was in the balance that night in Gethsemane, as also were all His prospects of glory, honor, immortality and high exaltation at the right hand of the Father, far above angels, principalities and powers.

No wonder the Master, realizing all this, was overwhelmed with the thought! No wonder He wished that if it were possible for the Divine Plan to be otherwise worked out, He might be saved from, spared from, the special tribulations and horrible experiences of the hours just before Him! Part of the horrors of that experience surely was the fact that He must be dealt with as a malefactor, as a blasphemer of God, as an enemy of God and of righteousness.

To a debased and depraved soul, this would mean little; but to One full of love and loyalty to the Father such experiences would be terrible--that He who had sacrificed His all, even His Heavenly glory and His earthly interests, to do the Father's will, should be considered a blasphemer of God, and that He should be crucified as a malefactor, an injurious person! What a terrible experience to one of the refinement and nobility of soul which Jesus possessed, of whom we read that He "was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners"!

Apparently this ignominy was the thing which Jesus prayed might pass away. He did not pray that He might not die; for He knew that He had come into the world for that purpose, and that only by His death could the death penalty resting against the human family be removed. He had been talking about His death repeatedly; He had not once thought of escaping death. He well knew that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." But He did hope that the Father might have some way of passing by the special ignominy of that hour. Yet even in His greatest distress the Master prayed, "Nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done."

STRENGTHENED FROM ON HIGH

St. Paul assures us that the Master's Gethsemane experiences were linked with fear--not fear of dying, but fear of remaining dead, fear that He would not be accounted of the Father worthy of that glorious resurrection which had been promised to Him on condition of absolute obedience. St. Paul says, "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to

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save Him out of death [by resurrection], was heard in respect to the things which He feared." (Hebrews 5:7.) He was saved out of death; and more than this, He was

given the assurance by the Father that He would be saved out of death.

This is the explanation of the statement that an angel of God appeared to Him in the Garden and strengthened Him--gave Him the assurance from the Father that He had been faithful up to that moment, and that the Divine blessing would be with Him in the hour of trial just at hand. From that moment onward, all the fear and agony were gone. If the Father had approved Him thus far, and if the Father's blessing and smile went with Him, He could endure all things, come what might. Throughout the remainder of that night and the following day, Jesus was the calmest of the calm, under the most trying circumstances. He comforted those who wept about Him; He committed His mother to the faithful St. John, etc.

In these experiences of the Master, we find more or less a repetition in His disciples. When assured that their sins are forgiven, that the Father Himself loves them, that His grace is sufficient for them, and that the Redeemer's robe of righteousness covers them, the followers of Jesus can, under such circumstances, be courageous, even while dreading death.

One great difference between the Master and His followers should be remembered: Whereas "of the people there were none" with Him, with us it is different; the Master is with us, saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Moreover, with us also there is a fellowship of spirit amongst the brethren of Christ, whose words of encouragement by the way, as they watch with us and pray with us, are a source of strength in every time of trouble. Thanking Him for all the Divine provision and arrangements, let us go onward to our Gethsemane, strong in the strength which God supplies through His Son.

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AN UNFAITHFUL TREASURER'S FALL

--OCTOBER 25.--MATTHEW 26:14-25,47-50; 27:3-10.--

"Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed!"--MATTHEW 26:24.

JUDAS hailed from the south of Palestine, while the other eleven of Jesus' disciples were Galileans. It is inferred that because of superior business qualities Judas was made the treasurer of the Apostolic company. The friends of Jesus noted the fact that He and His followers needed to give their entire time to the heralding of the Kingdom. It is not strange, therefore, that we read that some voluntarily donated money for their support.

We cannot imagine Jesus and His Apostles begging for money or even "passing the hat" for a collection. To have done so would have been to discount Jehovah's declaration that all the gold, all the silver, and the cattle upon a thousand hills are His; and to imply that He would have need to ask for assistance. On the contrary, the Scriptures tell us that some voluntarily contributed to the Master's support; for instance, Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and others. (Luke 8:3.) Such voluntary donations made it proper that there should be a common treasurer for the company, and that he should be of superior business acumen.

We find no reason for believing that Judas was a bad man at the time of his selection by Jesus to be one of the twelve Apostles. We have every reason to believe that he developed a bad character even under the most favorable influences--in the continual company of Jesus and the other Apostles, and with the Message of the Kingdom continually in his ears. There was, however, a beginning to his deflection; and the intimation of the Scriptures is that his temptation came along the lines of avarice, selfishness, love of money.

"A ROOT OF ALL EVIL"

Alas, how many honest men have been seduced from the path of righteousness by the love of money! We remember that one of the serious charges which Jesus brought against the Pharisees was that they were money-lovers. It would not seem at all strange if it should prove to be true that the difficulty with many Christians today also is along this line of love of money. It is still true that "the love of money is a root of all evil." (1 Timothy 6:10.) The Apostle declares that through this deception many pierce themselves with sorrows--not always so seriously as did Judas, however.

Judas loved money to such an extent that he was willing to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver which, on the basis of labor, amounted to between two hundred and three hundred dollars in value. Others have loved money to such an extent that they have sold their consciences to gain wealth. Some have sold the Truth for money believing that they would prosper in business better by advocating error. Some have sold the Church for money, and have been willing to preach what they did not believe for the hire of money and the approval of men. Some have sold their nation's interests for money, bartering their patriotism.

Surely there is great need for every one to be on guard against the insidious influence of the love of money. But we should clearly distinguish between money and the love of money; for it is the latter which causes ruin and which entraps and ensnares the soul. Money represents toil, labor, accumulation; and as such it should be valued for the good it can do. But to love money, to serve it, to make it an idol and to allow it to alienate our hearts from

God, we should not do. Let us not forget that this love of money was the primal cause of Judas' horrible failure.

A FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY

Not at first, but afterward apparently, did the disciples learn that Judas, who carried the treasurer's bag, was a thief. (John 12:6.) Doubtless even when appropriating the moneys contributed to the support of the little company of disciples, Judas could have some plausible excuse; for sin is always deceptive. Doubtless he would have said, "I laid the money away, thinking that the time would come when the Master and all of us would have greater need for money, and when my provident foresight would be appreciated." Brooding on the subject increased his desire for money, and led his active business mind to hatch out the plot for the betrayal of Jesus.

The record is that when Judas perceived that Jesus had been condemned, he had remorse for his action and took back the money to the chief priests, wishing to undo his deed. They laughed at him, declaring that it was no concern of theirs, but his own, if he had betrayed innocent blood. Because the returned money was "blood money," they could not put it into the Temple Treasury again. Instead, they purchased therewith a piece of cheap land, a potter's field, as a burial place for strangers. Thus they fulfilled to the very letter a prophecy which they had probably forgotten: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and they

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gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed."--
Matthew 27:9,10.

The account implies that Judas was surprised when Jesus was condemned. Apparently he surmised that Jesus, brought to the crucial test, would assert Himself as the Messiah and would triumph over His enemies. Judas thus probably thought that he would hasten the establishment of the Kingdom, in which he hoped to share. For his apology in the end he could say, "Well, we are ahead just thirty pieces of silver; and you may thank me for having brought matters to a climax sooner than otherwise." Thus he would have shone as a hero, as well as have demonstrated his financial wisdom and his suitability for the post of Grand Treasurer of the Kingdom. But in addition to all this, apparently he got a little angry at Jesus because the Master had approved of Mary's conduct in respect to the spikenard. It was under the impulse of that resentment that he first sought the priests and the Scribes to negotiate for the betrayal.

OBLIVION--NO HOPE OF A RESURRECTION

We are not hereby suggesting excuses for Judas. There can be no excuse properly offered for treachery to God and His Cause. We are merely pointing out the fact that every transgressor must first consent in his own mind to his wrong course. In other words, the mind, the conscience, must be perverted before each step of sin. Hence the words of Jesus are fully justified: "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born."--Matt. 26:24.

Such treachery, such willingness to hand over his Friend, his Teacher, and the One whom he had accepted as the Son of God and through whom he had expected the Messianic Kingdom, was perfidy of the worst type. With all the other Apostles, Judas had been called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and to become a sharer with Him in the sufferings and trials incidental to loyalty to the Truth, misunderstood by the people, and if faithful to receive with his Master a share in the Heavenly Kingdom, which is to bless the world. Judas, with the others, had preached the Kingdom, had cast out demons, and had healed the sick, by the power of God operating through the name of Jesus. He had been constantly with the Savior, and knew of the purity of His life, knew of His loyalty to God. Therefore all these things constituted his responsibility and his guilt.

The fact that he suicided implied a fulfilment of Jesus' words--that Judas wished that he had never been born. Every one who suicides declares the same fact. Yet there may be hope for other suicides, because of their ignorance, and because Christ died for all; and they, with others, must surely have a blessing and an opportunity for everlasting life as a result.

But in the case of Judas, all this was discounted by the fact that he had already enjoyed such privileges, opportunity and knowledge, and had sinned against light and knowledge. The declaration that he went to his own place, his appropriate place, does not signify that Judas or anybody else is to be eternally tortured as a punishment for sin. Rather, his own place was oblivion, hopeless oblivion, without prospect of a resurrection. He died like a natural brute beast, nor could argument be shown why such a character, who had enjoyed such privileges, should ever have any future opportunity.

HARMONY OF TWO RECORDS

As to the fate of Judas, one Scripture tells us that he went and hanged himself. (Matthew 27:5.) Another Scripture declares that his iniquity accomplished the purchase of a field; and that, falling headlong, he burst asunder, and his bowels gushed out. (Acts 1:18.) To harmonize these two accounts is very simple. Both are true. To hang himself, he probably chose the branch of a tree overhanging a precipice, where he could the more easily accomplish his purpose. If under the strain the rope broke, we can readily see how his headlong fall took place.

However, the matter of his death is of slight importance. The important thing is to notice how his soul died, in that he lost his relationship with God and with Christ, and all hope therefore of a future life. Yet the Master was gentle toward him to the very last, giving him every opportunity to relent and to retrace his steps, down to the very last act.

The fact that God had foreknown from the beginning that one of the Twelve would betray Jesus, the fact that the purchase of the field with the blood money had already been prophesied, did not alter the responsibility of Judas for his own fall. It was not God's foreknowledge

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that injured Judas, but his own wrong course; and thus it is with all. God's knowing from the beginning whatsoever will come to pass does not affect us, for He merely knows in respect to us what we will do of our own volition, our own yielding to avarice, to sin.

The testimony that Jesus knew in advance who would betray Him does not prove that Jesus knew this at the time when He chose Judas. He knew that the Scriptures intimated that one of His disciples would betray Him; and from the beginning of the deflection of Judas toward sin, toward avarice, Jesus knew that he must be the one who would commit the traitorous deed; yet in no sense of the word did Jesus' conduct lead Judas to the wrong, but rather forewarned him to the contrary.

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TAKE UP THY CROSS AND FOLLOW CHRIST

"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me."--Matt. 16:24.

THIS is a very beautiful and significant text. The words "come after Me" have not been properly translated; "follow Me" is a better translation. It was the custom in ancient times for a teacher to have a company of his disciples following him; as Socrates did, for instance. So our Lord's disciples, pupils, followed Him. They traveled with Him that they might have the opportunity of continually getting instruction from His lips. It was so with all the teachers in the olden time. Sometimes, as in the case of Gamaliel, they had a school--the pupils sat "at the feet of Gamaliel." They would discuss questions much as we do at "Bethel" table today. Their custom was that the pupils would ask questions and get the views of the teacher.

Jesus said that any one whom He instructed might

know from the beginning that he would have severe experiences; he would not receive great honor. On the contrary, those who would be His disciples must take up their cross and follow in His footsteps. There would be trials all along the journey, He told them. The Lord did not wish any to become disciples of His under a misapprehension. "Where I am, there shall also My disciple be." Those who follow Jesus in this vale of tears, witnessing for God and the Truth, will be blessed by Him and eventually share in His Messianic glory and honor and partake of immortality.

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OUR CONVENTION TOUR

The blessing of our Heavenly Father has surely been with us richly on our Western Convention Trip. Everywhere the European Conflagration was the topic of absorbing interest. Many are convinced that the consummation of the Gospel Age is at hand, and everywhere the Household of Faith are lifting up their heads and rejoicing that their deliverance is drawing nigh, as our Lord foretold in His great prophecy, recorded in Matthew 24 and parallel Scriptures.

The Editor and his stenographers left Brooklyn on August 23 and arrived at Chicago on the 24th, in time for the inauguration of the I.B.S.A. Temple. This building has been leased by the Chicago friends for the use of the local Ecclesia and for the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, and is well adapted for its purpose, being centrally located. The attendance was 1250 interested. The attention was excellent.

From Chicago the party sped westward, and arrived at Spokane, Wash., on August 27. Here we spoke to an audience of deeply interested Bible Students, numbering about two hundred. Thence we went to Everett, August 28, where a public meeting had been arranged for. About six hundred were present and gave the closest attention to the discourse. At Bellingham, August 29, fourteen hundred were at the public meeting.

From Bellingham the little party went to Vancouver, B.C., where seven hundred greeted them, giving very close attention to the discourse. August 30 was given to Seattle, Wash., where twenty-six hundred heard the address. Here, as elsewhere, the friends are very earnest and zealous. Thence we hastened to Tacoma, August 31, where fifteen hundred were in attendance.

Our next stop was at Santa Cruz, Cal. Here an interesting and profitable eight-day Convention of Bible Students was in session. The attendance was estimated to be about seven hundred and fifty, chiefly from the Pacific States. The party remained at the Convention about four days, September 2-4. The Photo-Drama was shown four evenings, and was greatly enjoyed by many of the citizens.

September 10 was devoted to a one-day Convention at

San Diego. Twelve hundred were in attendance at the public meeting, and many were turned away, for whose benefit an overflow meeting was arranged. September 11 the party were at Los Angeles, where the attendance was thirty-five hundred. September 13, at Salt Lake City, thirty-two hundred were in attendance. Thence we went to Denver, September 15, where six hundred friends listened to the discourse. Next was Colorado Springs, September 16, where eight hundred were in attendance.

Then the party went South to Fort Worth, Texas, where a three-day Convention was in progress, with four hundred and fifty Bible Students present. While this Convention was not large, yet it was full of interest. Then came San Antonio, September 19, where twenty-one hundred listened with deep attention to a discourse on up-to-date topics. At Houston, September 20, twenty-four hundred assembled to hear the address, and nearly as many were turned away. On September 21, at Beaumont, Texas, nine hundred listened with deep appreciation.

Continuing our journey, we reached New Orleans, September 22, where one thousand heard us. At Birmingham, Ala., September 24, fifteen hundred were present. Thence we went to Atlanta, Ga., where a four-day Convention met, September 24-27, with approximately four hundred and fifty in attendance, the delegates representing many states. After leaving our Atlanta friends, we hurried on to the Saratoga Convention.

The Saratoga Convention, although not a large one, was an extremely interesting gathering. The Convention proper numbered about 950. Some of the meetings ran up considerably more through local interest. One thing noticeable in this Convention, as well as at all the others, was the meek and quiet spirit of those in attendance. While all lifted up their heads rejoicing that our deliverance is near and hasteth greatly, nevertheless there was no spirit of excitement. Rather all seemed to realize that we have received of the Lord blessed promises and enlightenments which far more than repay for our trials and difficulties. All were resolved that the whole world would not compare with the Light and Peace and Hope already ours--not to mention the glorious things expected soon. Surely we prefer God's time, as well as God's Plan, above all others. If He but continue us in His favor, in the future as in the past, we may well rejoice in the experiences coming day by day, end when they may.

During our trip we continually encouraged the dear Household of Faith to await God's time for the accomplishment of our hopes, preferring it to our own, if different. While we everywhere noted that patient waiting was manifested, yet, on the other hand, we deplored the over-confidence of some respecting the exact time of the glorification of the Church. We endeavored to distinguish between our hope and the time of its fulfilment, and urged all to cast not away their confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. However, the present great war certainly stimulates our confidence in every feature of the Divine Program.

INTERESTING LETTERS

EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO A FRIEND

DEAR BROTHER:--

I arrived home safe Friday afternoon after a somewhat adventuresome journey.

At Yarmouth, I had an interesting experience. I was talking with two young women from Annapolis, when a young minister with whom they were acquainted came up, and they introduced me. Noticing my pin, he said in a rather challenging tone, "You are a Russellite?" "Yes," I said, "I am a Bible Student; and you are an Evolutionist." "Yes," he said. I then said, "I am glad to meet you. I have been wanting to hear the Evolution doctrine from a real Evolutionist."

He then proceeded to explain Evolution. I then asked him where people would evolve to after death. He said the soul kept on evolving. I asked him where men got their souls if these were the outcome of Evolution, and monkeys did not have any. He replied that surely God could impart to each man a soul. He gave me a pamphlet on Evolution by Dr. Elliot, and I gave him my WATCH TOWER to read.

When I had finished, he asked what I thought of it. I said, "I think it is very good for a man's idea, but he has no proof that it is correct--nothing at all to back it up, no proof of any kind. Now, I can prove everything I believe by the Bible."

Then the minister said, "But the Bible is self-contradictory; and what proofs have you that it is correct?"

"No," I said, "the Bible is not contradictory when you understand it; but it is the most harmonious and logical book ever written. Any one merely reading it must admit that it could not be written by man."

He finally promised to read some of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, which he told me he had in his home.

May the Lord's blessing be with you and all the dear Bethel family.

Your Sister in Christ, STELLA H. WATERMAN.

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EVER-INCREASING INTEREST AND APPRECIATION

DEAR BROTHER:--

Greetings in the name of the Lord, and may Grace, Peace and Mercy be multiplied unto you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ!

As a constant reader of THE WATCH TOWER for twelve years, with ever-increasing interest and appreciation, words fail to express the grand blessings I have received through the teachings of its columns. For this I rejoice and am indeed thankful. Nevertheless, during this time I have deeply regretted to observe that the specially interesting points in which

THE TOWER abounds were not more generally discussed among the brethren. I also noted that many of the dear friends, no doubt in their eagerness over the "new TOWER" which is so greatly appreciated, read them hurriedly and fail to assimilate many of the most precious points. Many do so with the thought of re-reading them more carefully later, but often fail to do so before the arrival of another TOWER.

I am glad to note that recently, this is largely being overcome, in one instance, at least, by a suggestion from the San Francisco Board of Elders and Deacons. A meeting for the discussion of these interesting points in THE TOWER was arranged, and they are now being discussed during luncheon Sunday evenings. All are asked to read their TOWERS critically, noting the special points of interest and underscoring them. At the table the leader cites each article separately and the friends read the points they have underscored, in their proper order, with a brief comment. Some of the most important ones are then thrown open to the Class for discussion. This, I believe, is very helpful and stimulates a critical reading.

Thanking you again for the columns of THE WATCH TOWER and your continued labor of love, I remain with prayers for our dear Master's continued blessing and guidance, in which Sr. A. joins, Your brother in the Lord, W. E. ABBOTT.--Calif.

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SPECIAL FALL VOLUNTEERING

Already over ten million copies of the regular 1914 Volunteer
Matter have been distributed in the U.S. and Canada,
although some places have not yet been supplied. We have a
large quantity still on hand which, however, is being rapidly
diminished. Further orders should be sent to us quickly.

As a follow-up to the regular 1914 ("End of the World")
edition, we have just issued another number of THE BIBLE
STUDENTS MONTHLY (Vol. 6, No. 5) treating "The Distress
of Nations" and the Cause of God's Anger--the prophetic
aspect of the present European War, and its relation to the
great Time of Trouble. We recommend the distribution of
this new matter wherever the "End of the World" edition has
gone.

As heretofore, the Society gladly supplies this literature
gratis, all charges prepaid. Order promptly whatever you can
judiciously use, stating exactly what localities you expect to
serve, and the census report of the population of the district.
Also mention any large proportion of population speaking
any other language than English. We will have this new
Volunteer Matter in the German and other languages later on.

The present is a favorable opportunity, while the eyes and

ears of the masses are open. Let us labor "while it is day:
the night cometh, when no man can work." "He that reapeth
receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that
both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."
--John 9:4; 4:36.

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MUSICAL AND DRAMA RECORDS.

It appears that the Phonograph records used by us are not usually kept in stock by music stores--in fact, many records are not procurable at all. We will be pleased to supply such as may be desired, and have provided a stock in advance. Any desiring a list of these records may drop us a post-card and have the list by return mail.

I.B.S.A. BEREAN BIBLE STUDIES FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER Questions from Manual on Series Second of "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES" STUDY V.

Week of November 1....Q. 57 to 61 Week of November 15....Q. 67 to 71
Week of November 8....Q. 62 to 66 Week of November 22....Q. 72 to 76
Week of November 29....Q. 77 to 81

Question Manuals on Vol. II., STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, 5c. each,
or 50c. per dozen, postpaid.

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VIEW FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE Scriptures foretell that in the end of this Age there will be a cry of "Peace! Peace!!" but that there will be no peace. (Jeremiah 6:14.) This prophecy has been fulfilled.

When the First National Arbitration Board convened at Geneva, Switzerland, and gave its first reward, September 14, 1872, the cry of "Universal Peace" went up all over the world. There was to be no more war. All difficulties between nations were to be settled by arbitration. How sadly disappointed must those people be who, in spite of the many wars since that time, have continued to cry, "Peace! Peace!" Their theory has been that universal peace between the nations would speedily usher in the Messianic Kingdom.

How few look to the Word of the Lord to see what He has to say on the subject or, looking, entirely disregard God's testimony through the Prophets, to the effect

that the present Age would end and the Millennium be inaugurated, not by Peace Conventions and Peace Treaties, but by "A Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation." (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21.) The Peace cry has received an especially severe shock in the present momentous war, involving more than any other war on the earth ever! Instead of the present war being nearly over, we incline to expect much more serious complications in Europe--that other nations will be drawn into the war.

Notwithstanding the fact that the President and the Secretary of State of our own land are wise men, lovers and promoters of peace; and notwithstanding the fact that there is no apparent reason why our country should ever be involved in this war, nevertheless we are apprehensive. The great nations of the old world, impoverishing themselves and destroying their commercial interests, as well as being robbed of hundreds of thousands of valuable lives by this war, will not wish to see the United States towering high above them in every way by reason of its isolation. We may be sure that the crafty statesmen of Europe, while professing interest in our peace, will really do all in their power to embroil us in war by one device or another.

SHORTENING OF THE DAYS OF TROUBLE

While desiring peace at home and abroad, all who are children of the Highest must desire the Father's will to be done--rather than our own. Hence, should the war extend even to our own land, in spite of everything we can do to the contrary, let us not be discontented, but still pray, "Thy will be done!" Let us look beyond the present terrible war to the glorious things which God's Word assures us lie just beyond it; namely, Messiah's Kingdom.

When we say that the Kingdom lies just beyond the war, we should note the fact that, according to the Scriptures, it will not be set up immediately. Following the terrible storm of this war will come a great revolution, symbolically styled "a great earthquake." (Revelation 16:18.) In conjunction with this social revolution, the Bible indicates that Churchianity will for a time be greatly exalted as the hoped-for power by which the revolution may be offset and stopped. During that brief time of Babylon's prosperity, the true Church will be in hard lines, from the earthly viewpoint. Nevertheless, "all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to His purpose."

Following the revolution and Churchianity's exaltation quickly will come the anarchy, which the Bible everywhere symbolizes by fire, because of its destructive force and influence. That will be the time mentioned by our Savior, saying, "Unless those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." (Matthew 24:22.) The Master tells us, however, that those days of anarchy and general strife--"every man's hand against his brother,

against his neighbor, and no peace to him that goeth out
or to him that cometh in"--shall be shortened. The establishment
of the Church in glory, the bringing of the
Elect into control of the world, will shorten those days
and inaugurate the Reign of the Prince of Peace.

PRAYING FOR PEACE IN EUROPE

Our Honorable President with praiseworthy intent requested
all Christian people to make October 4 a day of
prayer for peace in Europe. However, we cannot concur
with our Worthy President in this matter. Much as we
appreciate peace--and we have all our life labored to be
a peacemaker--we cannot pray the Almighty to change
His plans to conform to those of our Honored President.

For twenty-five hundred years God, through the Bible
Prophets, has been telling His people about this great war
and concerning the more terrible Armageddon which will
follow it; and can we expect Him to reverse the program
at our behest?

The prayers of these millions praying for the prosperity
of the Germans and the extermination of the Allies,
and the prayers of other millions for the success of
the Allies and the annihilation of the Germans, and the
prayers of the Pope and of our President and other good
people that this awful war shall promptly cease will all
go unanswered, if we read our Bible aright. The war
will proceed and will eventuate in no glorious victory for

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any nation, but in the horrible mutilation and impoverishment
of all. Next will follow the awful Armageddon of
Anarchy.

After that, peace, lasting peace, may be hoped for, because
God has declared it! It will be brought in by Messiah's
Kingdom, for which so long we have prayed--"Thy
Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as in Heaven."

For forty years we have been proclaiming this very
war and its glorious outcome, by sermons, oral and
printed, and in our books on Bible Study in twenty languages.
Now, when the very year has come and the
prophecy is being fulfilled, could we consistently ask the
Almighty to change His program? Nay! Rather, our
discourse on October 4 was from the Master's words,
respecting the present "DISTRESS OF NATIONS WITH PERPLEXITY,
men's hearts failing them for fear of those
things about to come on the earth."--Luke 21:25,26.

Our address was given in the New York City Temple
--fifteen hundred heard for two hours, and many were
turned away.

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CATCHING FISH WITH THE GOSPEL NET

"Jesus saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."--Matthew 4:19.

OUR Lord's parables, figures of speech, and more or less "dark sayings," such as this one, were usually based upon incidents connected with His ministry. We remember the context here--He had been preaching at the Sea of Galilee, and had put out in a boat because of the crowd of people. (Luke 5:1-11.) The boat was one that was used in the fishing business, conducted by Peter, James and John. Following this discourse, Jesus invited these men to become His disciples, using the words, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

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The expression, "fishers of men," suggests many good features illustrative of the work of the Gospel Age. In fishing for fish there is a carefulness exercised that is very necessary to success. The skilful fisherman studies what kind of fish-hook to use and what kind of bait to put on the hook. Then he catches the fish individually. Likewise very much of the work of this Age has been an individual work, accomplished by talking to people; those engaged in it should seek wisdom from on High to put the Message into such form as would be most helpful to people--that they may be caught by the Gospel.

The Lord uses an illustration of a drag-net to represent the work of the Gospel Age. During the past eighteen centuries the drag-net of the Gospel has been passing through the world. It has not caught all the fish; for it has been drawn only through certain parts of the earth which God chose especially to favor. Thus He has drawn a net full; and He says that at the end of this Age there will be a sorting of these fish--a putting some back into the sea, as not worthy, and a retaining of others. Throughout this Age there have been some drawn by the Gospel who have been unsuitable for God's work; they have not been the kind of people God has wished to choose. Therefore He did not make things so plain for such that they would stay; but rather has left some subjects obscure, in order that such would reject the Truth and turn aside.

THE NATURE OF THE HARVEST WORK

However, aside from this Parable of the Drag-net, which represents the Lord's people as fishers of men, and which might in some respects seem applicable only to the close of the Gospel Age, there is another commission. The general commission to all of the Lord's people applies today. It reads, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,

because He hath anointed me to preach the good tidings to the meek; to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to the 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 them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."--Isa. 61:1-3.

We read that when Jesus was speaking to the people He made some remarks, and gave some parables forth, which they could not understand. For instance, He said that unless they would eat of the flesh and drink of the blood of the Son of Man there would be no life in them. They said, Who can understand that? Who can accept that teaching? So they walked no more with Him--they got out of the net. Throughout this Age the Lord has been gathering in the fish. But the great work of selecting is to be accomplished in the end of this Age. To a certain extent in this Age thousands of people have been caught in the Gospel net and have been more or less brought under the influence of the Truth; and yet they are not fit for the Kingdom. Without any unkindness towards them, the Lord now simply puts them out of the place not suitable to them.

We are not to think of this comparison as perfectly representing this matter--but it has an illustrative power to be made useful in this connection. We do not really catch men as a fisherman catches a fish. The fisherman does the fish more or less harm in taking it out of the water, whether with a hook and line or with a drag-net; and those fish which are brought up in the drag-net are not honored in any manner. Our Lord used this illustration merely to represent how the Gospel fishing was to be done. His followers were to fish for men for the Kingdom--not to do them violence, but to do them good. Those who catch fish exercise a great deal of care. While catching the fish, they usually hide themselves, so that the fish will not see them, but the bait. So in drawing men to the Truth we should hide ourselves and throw out as bait those features of God's Word which would apply to this one or that one with whom we might be dealing.

Coming down to the present time, the question might arise, Is this Gospel Message still to be sent out, or have all the fish been caught and the Gospel net drawn to the shore, and will there be no more received? We answer that we do not so understand. We believe that we are away down in the Harvest of the Age; if not fully at the end of the Age, we believe that it must be very near.

OUR PRESENT ATTITUDE

Looking at the Harvest of the Jewish Age, we see that it was forty years long in one sense of the word; yet the beginning of that forty years was a very indefinite thing--and the closing seemed to extend over six months, perhaps. We remember that in the beginning of our

Lord's ministry there came forty days of His temptation; and that then came the time during which His disciples were being gathered to Him. For a year there was very little of importance accomplished. If we consider His experiences as typical, we might consider that the early part of the Harvest was not very sharply marked. The Harvest seemed to increase as it progressed, and did not culminate until after the destruction of Jerusalem. This fact leads us to wonder if there are not six months more of the Harvest here.

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The Lord evidently saw that it would be better for us that we should walk by faith, not by sight, and that we should have the experiences we are having. These experiences are excellent. We have been receiving things so good, so refreshing to us, that if they continue for six months longer, or six years longer, we shall be very glad that the Lord has given us this longer opportunity of testifying to His goodness. On the other hand, it may be that the work of the Harvesting of the "wheat" has been fully accomplished, and that the work of the present time is for the Great Company class and for the world.

"So on we go, not knowing,
We would not if we might;
We'd rather walk in the dark with God
Than go alone in the light;
We'd rather walk by faith with Him
Than go alone by sight."

The consummation of the Gospel Age is now upon us. We are expecting wonderful things, glorious things. The thing especially looked for now is the ending of Gentile dominion. The dissolution of the nations is at hand, and that disintegration precedes the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom.

At what time the Lord's people will be taken beyond the veil the Lord has not fully indicated. But we have the assurance that when He shall appear, be manifested--when His Epiphania shall occur--we shall be with Him, we shall be like Him and see Him as He is. He will not begin His great work of establishing the Kingdom until the Church shall be with Him. We may not understand all that this implies. Perhaps we may be with our Lord, in service on this side the veil for a while. We had not thought so; but we are simply willing that the Lord's will shall be done, whatever it may be, and we are waiting for the indications of His providence.

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

A sweet and glad surprise.

"One step we see before us,
'Tis all we need to see,
The light of Heaven more brightly shines,
When earth's illusions flee;
And sweetly through the silence comes
His loving 'Follow Me.'"

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THE ROYAL LAW OF LOVE

"We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification; for even Christ pleased not Himself."--Romans 15:1-3.

AS CHILDREN of God each one of us should use care that others are not injured by our liberty in Christ; for this would be condemned by the Law of Love. The Apostle clearly emphasizes this thought in this Epistle to the Church at Rome. He points out that all the Lord's children are not alike "strong in the faith." Some, weak in the faith, can see that Jesus is our Redeemer, but cannot realize as yet the liberty which we as sons have in Christ. One realizes that he is at liberty to eat whatever agrees with him; while another, who is weak, eats vegetables only, lest he violate some law under which he thinks himself. Some Christians condemn their brethren who eat meat, seeming to forget that our Lord ate flesh. We should learn to grant each other full liberty of conscience; the stronger should not despise the weaker, nor should the weaker judge others by himself. It should be sufficient for each of us to know that God accepts the others as well as ourselves, and manifests His acceptance by blessing them in His service.

It is the same with reference to observance of days. One esteems one day above another, as the Apostle says; while another esteems every day alike. Let each carry out fully the conviction of his own mind--whatever he

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believes to be the will of God for himself. When St. Paul urges that each "be fully persuaded in his own mind," he does not mean that each should make up his mind what is the will of God for all His children, and then stick to his opinion, whether right or wrong, and be unwilling to listen to or consider the thought of any others of the brethren on the subject. On the contrary, he urges growth into the full liberty of Christ, counseling patience and consideration

on the part of the stronger for the weaker. He approves the stronger, and plainly states that the brother who thinks himself under bondage regarding the eating of meat, the observance of Sabbath, etc., is the weak brother.

LOVE AND CONSIDERATION FOR THE WEAKER

The Apostle, however, counsels that if the weak brother observes such a bondage, not as an attempt to "keep the Law," and to justify himself thus before God, ignoring Christ's redemption-sacrifice, but because he thinks that our Redeemer wishes him to be bound by such ordinances and observances, than the stronger ones should not rail at his conscientious weakness, or make light of it, but should receive him as a brother, trusting that discipline, experience and growth in grace and knowledge will gradually bring him to the liberty which others of the brethren reach more quickly.

Those strong ones who enter fully into the spirit of the Apostle's statement, "It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak," and deny themselves what their consciences permit, have the greater blessing. They can realize in an additional degree that they are following in the Master's steps; "for even Christ pleased not Himself." But if the stronger brethren by sarcasm and influence should try to force the weaker ones to use a liberty which they do not realize, it would be forcing them into sin. Therefore the weaker brethren should be left to the liberty of their own consciences. The influences of love and truth alone should be brought to bear upon them, in the hope of gradually educating them to an appreciation of their full privileges as free men in Christ.

Thus the Body of Christ may be full of charity and unity, each member carrying out the convictions of his own mind as to the Lord's will, and each seeking to grow in grace and in knowledge, out of childhood's weakness into manhood's strength, as rapidly as possible, being developed as he feeds upon God's Word.

The Apostle refers especially to the observance of days as a lack of development, saying (Galatians 4:10,11), "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am anxious on your behalf, lest my labor for you has been in vain." He here addresses those who had once known the liberty of sons of God, but who were now going again into bondage through false teaching. He recognized in them an evidence that they were not growing into the liberty of sons of God, but going backward toward the servant condition; and he was fearful that this weakness and failure to maintain the liberty of sonship might lead

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them even to reject the Gospel--that Christ gave Himself for our sins--and accept as a gospel a hopeless substitute

--that Christ would save them if they kept the Law.

But glorious is the liberty of the sons of God! Let us stand fast in it, as the Lord enables us to grasp it in its fulness, yet at the same time extending sympathy and love to those who have not yet reached the high vantage-ground where they can get a broad, comprehensive view of our blessed standing in Christ. Thus we bear the infirmities of the weak brethren, our companions in the Way, and thus we are in harmony with the Law of Love.

THE BEAUTY OF SELF-ABNEGATION

The Apostle appears to be drawing to our attention the thought that selfishness is the predominating principle of the world. People are seeking generally to please themselves --often unjustly, sometimes justly, but simply ignoring others. He is pointing out that the Christian is to take a different course. We are enlisted under the banner of Christ, which is the banner of Love. We are to look well to the rules which belong to this new order of things of which we have become members. The followers of Christ, instead of seeking their own selfish interests, are to consider the interests of others. Instead of seeking their own pleasure, they are to seek the pleasure of others, where this will not conflict with their vow of consecration.

This does not mean that the disciples of Christ are to seek their own misery. But they are to give their thought and time to pleasing others rather than themselves. The Apostle tells us that this is the example set before us by our Leader, our Pattern--"For even Christ pleased not Himself." He was not in the world to seek to do the things pleasing to His own flesh. Quite to the contrary, He renounced His own fleshly interests and gratification for the benefit of mankind. So we covenant to do when we essay to walk in His steps. The denial of self, the taking up of the cross, means the renouncing of self-will and the leading of an unselfish life, in accord with the Divine Pattern and the Divine Plan.

OUR BRETHREN OUR NEIGHBORS IN CLOSEST SENSE

With this light upon the Apostle's words, our thought is that the primary meaning of the word neighbors as used by St. Paul is, those closest to us. That is to say, in the Church of Christ, our brethren are our neighbors; they are the ones nearest, closest to our hearts. All the children of God are our brethren; they are particularly our neighbors because they are on our own plane. We should especially seek to please these to their edification. This does not mean that we should necessarily please them according to the flesh; for this would, in many cases be quite the reverse of their edification. If we please the brethren rightly, we shall rather "stir up their pure minds," their spiritual minds, to love and faith and zeal, to good works. This implies that the word please is used here in a limited sense.

It is not possible for us to please all people. The direction of our energies should be for their good as we have opportunity. Even though they be not saints, we should "provoke" them--rouse them--"to love and good works" as far as possible, and not to anger or malice or sin or anything unworthy. We may not always be successful in pleasing people to their edification. There may be times when even the brethren will feel aggrieved rather than pleased at our efforts to serve them. We think, however, that if we seek to please them to edification, striving to exercise the spirit of a sound mind, our course will have the Lord's approval and blessing, whether it has the approval of others--even the brethren--or not.

So let every one of us endeavor to "please his neighbor for his good to edification." This matter of neighborhood, the condition of nearness, extends, next to the Church, to our own families. Of course, as relates to earthly obligations and temporal needs our family would have the first claim, and would be our neighbors, very near, according to the flesh. We should seek to please them for their edification--should seek to do them good, as here suggested. The same principle would extend, as we can readily see, to the butcher, the baker, the ice-man, etc. We are not to please any of these to their injury, or in any way that would not be for their edification. We are not to descend to the world's methods. If they wish to tell stories that are not good, not pure, we are not to join in with them. If we cannot please them by that which is good, we are to avoid unnecessary contact. We are to do good and to edify only.

THE WORLD RECOGNIZES THE GOOD

We should endeavor to be as pleasing as possible to all of our neighbors. If we rebuke in a rude way, it would not be pleasing to them, nor would it be likely to edify them. There is a way in which we can give proper reproof even to very worldly people. The world has a higher standard morally and religiously than they would be willing to acknowledge. Even if they sneer outwardly, in their hearts they recognize that which is good. We often find people who are impure in their own lives who like the society of the pure. They have some appreciation of the good, even though, being defiled themselves, they are likely to defile whatever they touch.

It would not be proper for us to expect that we can do a great deal of good to worldly people--at least that much fruitage will generally be manifested--at present. Our aim should always be to please as far as possible, as far as loyalty to God and the Truth will permit. We should not be of that "grouchy" sort, always going through the world with a quarrel. Rather we should let our light shine, that they may see our good works, and thus "glorify God in the Day of their visitation." A sweet, kindly spirit is the very best recommendation we can give the world now of the power of the Truth. The Lord's people should

be kindly disposed toward all men--in the Church especially, but also toward all with whom we come in contact.

A WORD OF WARNING

Let us here say that we fear that some of the Lord's children who have a husband or a wife not in harmony with the Truth, or perhaps more or less in harmony, but not fully consecrated to the Lord, make a mistake and perhaps by their example prevent the development of further interest in the companion. If, for instance, a husband is fully consecrated and his wife is not, the husband should exercise great care that his zeal for the Truth does not lead him to neglect his duty in helping to lift the burdens of household care, etc., which are pressing upon the wife. Volunteer work, meetings, etc., should not so fill his spare time as to cause him to overlook the fact that he owes a very special duty to his wife in ministering to her real needs or comforts.

We fear that some have been embittered and hindered from a full acceptance of the Truth or led to opposition by such lack of loving, thoughtful consideration on the part of the companion who professes entire consecration to the Lord. If we really are fully the Lord's, our home is the first place where this should be demonstrated. No amount of zeal for the service of the Truth outside of our homes will excuse us from the duties which we owe to our families and which they have a right to expect. To fulfil our obligations is a real service for the Truth, and often a most effectual one. If there is water or coal or wood to carry, or other real services which a husband may and should render to his wife, these should not be neglected

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for any other service. If she is willing to attend some of the meetings, let him show an appreciation of her company and a pleasure to have her go.

The same rule applies to the consecrated wife. Some time and personal service are just requirements of the husband; and the wife should exercise the spirit of justice, love and of a sound mind along this line, and not give her companion just cause to feel that he is forgotten, unloved and uncared for because of the wife's new interests. The husband is the rightful head of the home. There are duties which are obligations to every child of God, and to neglect or ignore these may be the cause of incalculable harm. The real duties of a husband or wife or parent or child are never abrogated when we give ourselves to the Lord. Each consecrated saint should seek by prayer and by the study of the Word and of Divine providences in our lives to discern the will of the Lord concerning us, that we may be "living epistles" which shall glorify our God, and not bring a reproach upon His cause or upon our own Christian profession.

SACRIFICE OUR SPECIAL MISSION

Each member of the Royal Priesthood is to remember that the special mission of our office, our vocation, our calling, in the present time is to sacrifice. One form of service frequently not discerned by the Lord's people is the opportunity of renouncing our own desires or plans, our own methods or preferences, and in the interests of peace accepting instead the plans, the desires, the preferences of others--where it is merely a matter of personal preference. Where we believe the Lord will be as well pleased to have the matter the one way or the other, a yielding of our own wishes often proves a blessing, both to the one yielding and to the one receiving the kindness and consideration. This is the spirit of love, the spirit of the Master.

In the Body of Christ the different members have their various inherited weaknesses against which they must wage a lifelong warfare; and these weaknesses are sometimes of such a nature as to interfere to some extent with the rights and comforts of others as well as of themselves. And just here the Apostle offers the word of counsel, "We, then, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." This does not imply that we should not expostulate with such a one and endeavor to help him to get rid of his infirmity. This we should do, in the spirit of meekness and kindness, while we humbly endure the trial of our patience. It is his good that we are to seek, not chiefly our own greater enjoyment of physical or mental comfort. We are to please him for his edification, not by simply ignoring his fault, as though we considered it right, but, if there be suitable opportunity, by kindly urging him to strive against it, still humbly and patiently submitting to the discomfort it brings to us.

If this spirit prevails, the Apostle further shows (1 Corinthians 12:24-26), there need be no schism in the Body; for the members all have a mutual care and a mutual love one for another--a care which seeks to encourage and strengthen all that is good and to discourage, by our example and sometimes by a kindly word, all that is unbecoming, and a love that throws its mantle over a deformity and endeavors to conceal a fault rather than to expose the weaker brother or sister to the reproach of the other brethren. Thus, in the true Church of Christ, which is knit together in love, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with him; or if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with him, and to some degree share the honor, just as in an earthly family, when one member rises to an honorable distinction, all the members of the family partake of that honor and joy.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!

For such self-sacrificing love how necessary is the spirit of humility, gentleness, patience and faith! The Master's words along this line are very forceful--"Except

ye be converted [from the spirit of the world to the Spirit of Christ] and become as little children [in meekness and teachableness], ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." This blessed Law of Christ, the Law of Love, should rule in all who have taken by consecration the name of Christ. Its hallowed influence should radiate from us, not only among the brethren, but also out upon the world, as a powerful witness to the effect of the grace of God in the heart. Thus we shall demonstrate to them that the love of God received into a life brings peace and harmony and happiness; that it makes noble, devoted, faithful husbands; more kind, loyal and tender wives; more obedient, loving children; more kind, good neighbors; and that it pours "oil on the troubled waters" of all our experiences, bringing blessing wherever it reaches.

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"TREES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS"

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and established in the Faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."--Colossians 2:6,7.

THE context from which our text is taken seems to show that the Apostle is contrasting with the Gospel hope the various hopes which might go to establish one in some kind of faith, some kind of belief, some kind of course in life. But he is addressing those especially who have already accepted Jesus Christ as God's Representative --those who believe that God has sent His Son into the world to be the Redeemer of the race of Adam, and by and by to be the Deliverer of mankind from the power of sin and death. All those who are in Christ Jesus have received Him with this understanding. This is the only Message which God has sent; this is "the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

DIVINE VS. HUMAN MESSAGE

The Apostle Paul urged those to whom he wrote to continue in this faith, and not to try to combine earthly philosophy with this Heavenly Message. As they had received Christ as God's Anointed and their Sufficiency in all things--the One "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Deity bodily"--so they were to walk. As they had recognized Him as the Heavenly Teacher, so they were to continue to make progress in the same way--the path that leads to glory, honor and immortality. They were not to think for one moment that any human

teaching could be mixed with the Divine Message; for any other doctrine would serve only to confuse the Heavenly Message in the minds of the hearers.

This would not mean, however, that the teachings of the Apostles were to be ignored, for the Master especially informed the Church that His Twelve Apostles would be His mouthpieces. It would, however, guard us against any supposition that there would be any other teaching or any other Church to take the place of Jesus and His Apostles. To these He declared that whatsoever things they would bind on earth would be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever things they would loose on earth would be loosed in Heaven.

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DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL PLANT

Having stated the matter in this way, the Apostle then uses a forceful illustration to show how we are to progress in Christ. Turning from the figure of a man walking in Christ as a member of His Body, St. Paul gives us the picture of a tree, the root of which goes downward and the trunk of which reaches upward, to obtain that nourishment which will give it strength and stability. As the roots of a tree push themselves downward and imbibe the nutriment of the soil, while at the same time the trunk and the branches reach up into the atmosphere to obtain through the leaves the necessary elements of growth, so the mentality of the Christian takes hold of the great and precious promises of the Word of God, while at the same time he is building character through his heart appreciation of these promises, in connection with the experiences of life. The roots of faith push down deep into the knowledge of the Divine Plan, while the tree of character grows higher and higher, developing and maturing the rich fruits of the Holy Spirit of God; for instruction is a form of construction.

While the Christian is thus growing up in character-likeness to our Redeemer, and his roots of faith are reaching deep down into the deep things of the Word of God, he is becoming established, settled. A tree that is well rooted in the earth is hard to uproot. It has a wonderful strength, a wonderful hold upon the earth, and requires years to die out. So it is with the Christian whose faith has been properly established; he should be so fixed, so established in the promises of God's Word, that no wind of doctrine could overturn his faith.

Whoever is continually looking around for something new is thus demonstrating the fact that he is not established

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in the Faith. Having once made sure that the Divine Plan is the Plan of God, we should not permit

ourselves to be moved away from that position. On all Christians who are thus rooted and grounded in the Scriptures the theories of our day--Evolution, Christian Science, New Thought, etc.--have no effect whatever. No Christian growth will be developed nor spiritual life retained unless the soul becomes fixed and settled in the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

ONE CAUSE OF SPIRITUAL DECAY

When once we have seen the Plan of God as revealed in Jesus, and have given ourselves to God and the study of His Word, the only way to retain our spiritual life is to continue in this doctrine, to root ourselves in this soil and remain there. We are not to seek other fields with the thought that we can receive additional nourishment there, and that an admixture of other elements with what we have will be advantageous. No theories will mix with the Lord's Plan. It is complete; it needs no assistance from other systems of belief. Any attempt to incorporate with it theories and ideas of men will only destroy its value. We can never become rooted and built up in Christ by such a course; our spiritual decay, and finally our spiritual death, would be the result.

No child of God can be carried about by every wind of doctrine; nor can he indulge in a morbid curiosity as to what this or that new theory may teach. To do so is very dangerous to the spirituality of a Christian. For one who has never known the Truth there might be some reason for such a course, but for one who has once thoroughly proven what is the Truth in Christ to go hunting around for new pastures in which to feed, there is no excuse. Either he has never been established in Christ, or else he has fallen into a spiritual decline. There is an exhaustless field for thought and for mental and spiritual activity in the Plan of God in all its varied features.

We believe that God purposed to have a Seed of Abraham through whom a blessing would come to all the families of the earth. Those who look for the fulfilment of this Promise realize that Christ is the Seed of Abraham and that His work is to fulfil this Promise. For this purpose He came into the world. Later on, the Church learn that not only Christ Jesus, the Head, but also the Church, His Body, are sharing in the same faith, the same Promise made to Abraham. Each individual called has the opportunity of coming in, of exercising his faith, and of being built up as a member of the Body of Christ. By this time the Body of Christ must be nearly complete. The hour is at hand when this glorious Seed of Abraham is to take hold of the affairs of earth and bring in "the Restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the Holy Prophets since the world began."--Acts 3:19-21.

As a tree does not breathe the same element at all times, and as it is not always flooded with sunshine, but needs also the rains and storms for its development, so

the child of God needs varied experiences and sometimes change of environment to best develop all the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The great Husbandman knows just what experiences and surroundings each one of his "trees" needs--how much sunshine, how much rain, how much cold and how much heat, how much pruning--and He will supply just what is best adapted to each case. He knows how to vary these conditions, environments, etc., without disturbing the process of rooting and upbuilding, but developing it. This we do not know how to accomplish, but would bring upon ourselves spiritual disaster. So we need to keep ourselves continually under the care of the skilful Husbandman and earnestly co-operate with Him, that we may grow and become strong and immovable--firmly established.

DEPTH OF ROOT SHOWN IN VIGOR AND FRUITAGE

The depth and the spread of the roots of a tree are shown by the vigor and the fruitage of the tree. A tree that is not deeply and firmly grounded can neither bring forth rich, luscious fruit nor furnish cool, refreshing shade to man. Depth of root is absolutely essential. So the Christian's faith must be deeply grounded in Christ; and thus shall we also grow up into Him, learning more and more what is the Divine will as expressed in Him. The rooting process is unseen, and can be judged only by its outward manifestations. When there is luxuriant foliage there is good rooting. But the growth must not stop there; fruit must be borne. And so the spiritual life of the child of God will manifest itself more and more in its likeness to Christ. To vary the figure, the Christian will not only be a branch in the Vine, but will bear rich clusters of fruit, which should become more choice in quality and size year by year.

We sometimes see Christians who have little knowledge of worldly things and yet have deep spirituality, very deep rooting and grounding in Christ, a clear insight into the deep things of God, and a rich Christian experience. Perhaps their knowledge of the usages of polite society is less than that of many others of their brethren; they may have had fewer opportunities to learn all these details; and yet their ripe attainments in Christ may shame some who are more outwardly correct according to the social standards of the world. How careful we should be that our standards of judgment and our estimates of character are fashioned after the pattern of the Master; that we look beneath the surface; that we note rather the

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real, the essential traits, than any outward peculiarities of the flesh which in the sight of the Lord would have no weight in deciding the quality of the character or the place in the Kingdom.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

If we are to be the judges of the world in the next Age, how shall we be fitted for this position, if we do not learn now how to take the proper viewpoint, the Lord's viewpoint, in our estimates of our brethren? If our love and our esteem for them is gaged by trifles, yea, by matters even unworthy of notice in the eyes of the Lord, are we developing the qualities of character which will fit us to be the judges of the incoming Age? How are we growing up into Christ in all things? Let us judge ourselves rigidly along these lines, that we may indeed become like the Master and win His final approval.

The Apostle urges that we become established in the faith. This term refers to "the faith which was once delivered to the saints"--the one Faith. This is to hold at all costs. Satan will attempt to divert our minds into other channels, to draw our attention to some new thing. But the Plan of God, the Truth of God, as revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, is but one. It is given us for our instruction in righteousness, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." (2 Timothy 3:17.) It is not the truth of Geometry or Trigonometry or Geology or Astronomy or any other science that we are to be diligent to study and be grounded and built up in, but God's Word. (John 17:17.) These other truths are very well in their way, but we have little time to study these now. We shall have all eternity in which to learn all the wonders of creation, but now we are to apply ourselves especially to the mastery of spiritual Truth, the deep things of the Mystery of God, revealed to His saints for a specific purpose.

AN ESTABLISHED CHRISTIAN NOT A BIGOT

The Truth embraces all the Scriptural teachings relative to Christ and His work, to our relationship to Him as members of His Body, and to the brethren as fellow-members. We are to abide therein with thanksgiving.

We should familiarize ourselves with the different features of this Truth more and more. We should be clear in regard to what our Lord taught and why He taught it, and should know how to connect the different parts of the Truth into a harmonious whole. We are to be thoroughly furnished. We are heartily to appreciate the loving kindness of our God in revealing to us these glorious things, and to realize that we did not originate them ourselves, nor was any man the originator of them, but the Lord Himself. They are the Gift of God to us, and we are to be most thankful for this great Gift, to guard it jealously as a priceless treasure, and to let our light shine to the glory of God's name.

The general sentiment among the teachers of false doctrine, and even among the world in general, who do not believe in the necessity or the advisability of being established in faith, is that to be established is to be

bigoted. Those who are so unfair in mind as to receive and tenaciously hold what they have never proven, either by sound logic or by the authority of the Word of God, are rightly called bigots. But one who in simple, childlike faith accepts and firmly holds to what God has inspired, what He has caused to be written in His Word for our instruction, is not a bigot, but a strong, established character, and will stand when all the structures built upon the numerous theories and imaginings of men shall have fallen. The great Day now upon us is trying every man's character-structure, of what sort it is, and but very few, even among professed Christians, will stand the test.

The few who will pass safely through this crucial trial without loss are those only who have become established in the Truth of God, "rooted and grounded and built up into Christ." The difference between a strong and steadfast Christian and a bigot is that one is established in Truth, and the other is established in error. The "fire" of this Day will continue to burn and to manifest the great difference between the two classes, until all have been tested and tried and found worthy or unworthy.

IMPORTANCE OF SELF-SCRUTINY

The Apostle's words in our text lead each child of God back to the time when he first made his own consecration. Under what conditions did we come into Christ? We recall that it required much humility on our part to acknowledge that we were sinners, utterly unable to save

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ourselves. Some seem to forget the way in which they started. They started with faith and humility and meekness, and with the desire to be truly built up into the Master's likeness. But they seem by degrees to lose sight of this, and begin to grow in another direction than straight upward into the fulness of Christ. They like to make some show before the world. They come to neglect the first principles of Christian development, while still talking about the doctrines, or making up doctrines of their own.

Thus gradually these get away from the doctrines and the Spirit of Christ. The Apostle puts us on guard against these dangers: Are you sure that you ever really received Christ? Are you sure that you ever actually made a full consecration to God and became a New Creature? You should know this. If you did, then make sure that you are progressing in His likeness. Without careful scrutiny, you might think you are progressing when you are not. The Narrow Way remains narrow unto the end of the journey; a mere profession of faith and a certain round of observances are not sufficient. Remember that we are to confess the Lord by our looks, by our manner, by all the acts and words of life.

Only by continual scrutiny of ourselves in the light of God's Word can we make real progress in the narrow way in which our Master walked. Truth is to become brighter and fuller and more luminous as we go onward. To this end, we must keep close to the Word and in line with His Program. The Lord will not accept little, undeveloped sprouts for the Kingdom, but He wants those that have grown and matured--strong, sturdy "trees of righteousness."--Isaiah 61:3.

GOD'S WORD ALONE WILL UPBUILD

Delve into the promises of God more and more. As you do this, the roots of faith will draw up the nutriment and send it out into your life, and you will grow, just as a tree grows, because nourished, fed. Thus alone will you become established in The Faith, and not in your imaginings nor the imaginings of others. Our faith is to grow stronger and more vigorous day by day. It is not to be a faith in ourselves or in anything apart from the Lord. Faith is what we started with in the beginning, and we shall need it in increasing measure as we go on in our upward way--faith in God and in His sure Word. All that we know as children of the Lord has come to us through the channel of Jesus, His holy Apostles, and the Prophets of old, and we are to continue feeding at this same table with thanksgiving.

We are not to feel a spirit of bondage, and say to ourselves, "I would like to ramble outside; I do not like to confine myself merely to what the Bible teaches. I

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would like more liberty." This disposition is not the spirit of a true son of God. Such sentiments encouraged would lead to utter spiritual disaster. All such temptations, if they come, must be promptly and positively resisted. Our spirit should be one of deepest gratitude and thankfulness that we have been granted this glorious Divine Revelation. Following thus in the Lord's way, we find the only true joy, and can make the only true progress. "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."--2 Peter 1:10,11.

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THE RESURRECTION THE GREATEST OF MIRACLES

IN HIS New Creation God began to create something entirely distinct from anything that He had yet made. The New Creature is not an earthly creature; and nothing

that is of the earthly being will ever have a part, to our understanding, in that New Creation, either now or at any time. Nothing will carry over from the human to the Divine, the human to the spiritual.

The human being is more or less depraved. He hears something about God, about the Divine nature, about what sin is and why it is undesirable, about the reconciliation which God has provided through Christ, and about the invitation to become joint-heirs with Christ in His Heavenly Kingdom. He becomes conscious of all this through his ears, through human power; for he has no other power. He must have a hearing ear, else he would not hear the Message at the present time. Some have more of the hearing ear, others have less. The one who has more of the hearing ear would be more attentive, more pleased, when he learns that God has a provision for the assistance of repentant sinners. The more the depravity the less of the hearing ear. The depraved person lives on a natural plane; therefore he has less inclination to come to God and less of the hearing ear to hear anything that God would have to say. But the class who cannot hear more or less distinctly have had their ears dulled by the Adversary with false doctrine.

HOW TO BECOME A NEW CREATURE

What we do see, then, is God's gracious invitation to become associates with Jesus; and this is Good Tidings to those who have the hearing ear. We say, "I am glad that God has invited me to come back into His family, and that He has provided for the covering of my imperfections. I am pleased to know that there is a special invitation now to those who have the mind of Christ and who desire to walk in His steps, and I gladly avail myself of the arrangement. In harmony with this invitation I offer myself a living sacrifice."

When we have done this, we have been converted. In what way? We are turned around from the way of sin and from our own will, turned to go in the way of righteousness. This is conversion.

The next step for us to take is that of making a consecration to become a living sacrifice to God. And that consecration of our all to God includes everything that belongs to us--all that we are--the human ego, personality --all of its hopes, aims, possessions, for the future in every shape and form. Everything is included in that consecration to God. Did this make us New Creatures? No. But it puts us in the way that we are eligible to that position. What is the next step? The next step is the application of the merit of Jesus, put over us as the wedding garment, covering our imperfections. Of what use is this to us? It makes us acceptable to God. The Apostle tells us to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, and our reasonable service. --Romans 12:1.

The next thing in order is for God to indicate His acceptance of that which we offer and which is accepted. This He does by begetting us of the Holy Spirit. Just what this means we are not wise enough to know. God foreknew Jesus Christ as the Head of the Body and He foreknew us, the class predestined to be the members of that Body. And now by coming under the required conditions we are accepted as members of this class. We are to show our devotion and our loyalty, to show that our surrender of our will is a genuine thing. This we do by being exercised by our contact with the Truth. If we have been in error, our loyalty will be determined by the way in which we weigh the matter and decide it. If we decide the matter slowly, it means that we are a little obtuse. If we decide the matter quickly between the truth and the error, it means that we are loyal to God's will, His Truth, and thus we are all the more pleasing to Him, as a loyal child. If we decide the matter slowly He will not cut us off, but perhaps will give us some chastisements; for we are in the School of Christ.

HOW THE NEW CREATURE GROWS

In one picture we are represented as embryos, not yet born; in another picture as children, not yet having reached manhood, but as growing in grace and knowledge

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and character. Either picture is very beautiful. But we cannot mix them. We cannot imagine the child not born as growing in knowledge, etc., nor can we imagine one developing toward manhood as an embryo. In the embryo picture we perceive that every human child must grow, and that in order to do so it is dependent on nourishment. If some accident happen, that embryo might die; if there were some miscarriage, the embryo might never be brought forth into life. We see that from the time we became New Creatures in Christ, we began to develop the new mind. The brain is the same as before the new will developed, and the body the same; just as a mother is the same person that she was before the child was begotten.

Let us consider the subject from another viewpoint. This New Creature is the governing power--the only thing that God recognizes, and that we recognize, as having control of this mortal body. Why does the New Creature have the control? Because the will is transferred from human interest to God's will. God's will is now our will as New Creatures. We have full rights and control in this body, whose earthly rights are given up. God has accepted the sacrifice, and the New Creature must be loyal in controlling the body in accord with the Divine will. Henceforth we are to see that the mortal body is kept under. Some people might say that

we are treating it unkindly; but from God's standpoint we are treating it as wisely as possible, in order to do God's will. If it were God's will that we undertake some great work, we would certainly put the body through a course of training to fit it for the undertaking.

Practically, the New Creature says to the mortal body, "You are my body only for the time being. I am the New Creature, desiring to use you in God's service, in order that I may see how obedient I can be to God's

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Cause." The old creature might say, "But I have some rights." The New Creature replies, "You have no rights. I shall use my judgment as to what you shall do or not do." If the New Creature yielded to the old creature, the latter would prosper in its own aims and projects, and the New Creature would be puny and weak in courage, strength and everything else. The New Creature is to assume control of all the interests of the old creature, to sacrifice all that is to be sacrificed to the will of God.

PERSONALITY MAKES SOUL

The more we do this, the stronger we become spiritually; and the stronger we become spiritually, the more ready we shall be for our change. What is our change? It is the spirit birth in the resurrection. Not one atom of this old body will go into the new condition. What, then, will go into the new condition? It is the New Creature? What is the New Creature? It is the ego which lives in the mortal body, which feeds not upon natural bread, but upon every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

If God has a work for the New Creature to do in the present time, then we are to take reasonable care of this body. To misuse the body would not be in harmony with God's will. The body has become the New Creature's property. The New Creature will take the dominant control of that body. A spiritual body would not be a soul without the ego, the personality, the being, any more than would the earthly body. It is the ego, the personality, that makes the soul. Simply one hundred and fifty pounds or so of matter does not make soul.

The soul is the thing that comes down from the father to the child. Adam and Eve gave soul to their children, and so that spark of life which God gave originally continues to come down. In the resurrection that soul, or spark of life, is carried over and becomes the new soul. This spark of life which God recognizes all the while and preserves in all of its development, is to be transferred to a new body that will be fully in harmony with it. There will not be any discord, any inharmony, between the new mind and the new body. If the new mind grows very strong now, it will have all the more difficulty and conflict with the old body and will have all the more

desire for the new body.

PROCESS OF TRANSFERENCE NOT KNOWN

Can you explain to us how this new life will be transferred to the new body? We cannot. In the case of our Lord Jesus, we have the explanation that the Logos, a spirit being, left the spirit condition, came to earthly conditions and became the personality, ego, man, in earthly conditions. And we have the account that this same One who came into the world, the same One who died and went away again to Heaven, is coming again. It is the same ego. It has changed its character, its power, according to the different body. At first it had a spiritual body; afterward it had a human body; it now has a Divine body, superior to all. But the ego, the personality, has persisted with all of these bodies.

Our ego, our personality, is to pass from this earthly body and be given a new body. The power by which this can be done is Divine Power. If anybody can explain what that is, of what the first man was made a soul, perhaps we could explain how it is with the New Creature. Or if any one can explain what makes the germ of wheat grow, perhaps we can explain how the New Creature has this germ and how it grows. We must trust in God's Power for this whole matter of the resurrection, not only of the New Creature, but also of the world in general.

Whoever doubts Divine Power cannot believe in a resurrection. We cannot imagine, for instance, how Moses or Abraham or anyone else of the remote past can be raised to life so that he would know himself, read the story of his life in the Bible, and remember that the events therein recorded were true. How that can be God only knows. We believe it because God says it. If we knew how to do it, perhaps we could make a resurrection ourselves.

A HELPFUL ILLUSTRATION

But it is just as easy to understand about the resurrection of a man to the human plane and the bringing of him into a new human body as to understand how the New Creature, the new soul, can be brought into its new body. It is the New Creature that will get the new body. When we get our spirit bodies we shall know all about the process; for it is written that when we get the spiritual bodies we shall know even as we are known.-- 1 Corinthians 13:12.

Meantime, however, we might find illustrations to help us to understand. Take, for instance, the making of a record for the phonograph. Something went out of the mouth, and made little indentations on a cylinder of wax. Later on, from that very wax cylinder the voice of the speaker is reproduced. Now, then, if we know how to reproduce the human voice, it gives us a little illustration

of how God, with His unlimited Power, can preserve everything recorded by the convolutions of our brain, and of how these could be preserved in the future absolutely --everything by which we could know ourselves in the future. We do not know ourselves by the number of pounds weight we are or by the difference in our beard. We know ourselves by something in our mind. But if our reason be gone, then we would not know ourselves.

God has made us New Creatures. He is the All-powerful One who knows how to do this. And the more we come to know about Him and the length, the depth, the height and the breadth of His Wisdom, the more we know how to appreciate all He has told us, and the more we have absolute confidence in Him. It is wise foolishness that God should promise a resurrection. The world cannot understand--to them it is foolishness. They cannot believe in a resurrection; therefore they cannot have the joy we can have through the exercise of our faith.

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THE LIGHT OF THE WORD

"The light of the Word shines brighter and brighter
As wider and wider God opens my eyes;
My trials and burdens seem lighter and lighter,
And fairer and fairer the Heavenly prize.

"The wealth of this world seems poorer and poorer,
And farther and farther it fades from my sight.
The prize of my calling seems surer and surer
As straighter and straighter I walk in the light.

"My waiting on Jesus is dearer and dearer
As longer and longer I lie on His breast.
Without Him I'm nothing, seems clearer and clearer,
And more and more sweetly in Jesus I rest.

"My joy in my Savior is growing and growing
As stronger and stronger I trust in His Word.
My peace like a river is flowing and flowing,
As harder and harder I lean on the Lord.

"My praise and thanksgiving are swelling and swelling
As broader and broader the promises prove;
The wonderful story I'm telling and telling,
And more and more sweetly I rest in His love."

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MOCK TRIALS OF JESUS

--NOVEMBER 1.--MATTHEW 26:57-68.--

"As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth."--Isaiah 53:7.

JUSTICE is a quality of mind which naturally and properly commends itself to every rational being, civilized or heathen. Every nation strives, therefore, to have just laws upon its statute books; and it must be admitted that many of the laws of the world, including those of Lycurgus and those of Caesar, have manifested much wisdom and much justice.

But the Jewish Law, given by God Himself at Mount Sinai at the hand of Moses, properly claims the highest place; and the laws of all nations in any degree claiming to recognize Christianity properly seek to represent the principles of justice on the highest plane. Nevertheless, when it comes to the interpreting of these laws, and their application to individual cases, we find that everywhere there is a tendency to make excuse and depart from the laws and from the principles of justice under the claim that the circumstances and conditions of the case make necessary such a violation of law and of just principles.

The story of the conviction of Jesus unjustly, by a Jewish court and in violation of Jewish Law, must not surprise us nor be thought different from what has occurred in numerous cases in other courts.

AN ILLEGAL ARREST

Jesus was arrested, neither by Pilate's orders nor by Herod's nor by their soldiers. His arrest was made at the instance of the high priest and his associates, who particularly had concluded that the life and ministry of Jesus were inimical to their plans and projects and to what they

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considered to be the best interests of Judaism. The murder of Jesus was plotted in advance. But the murderers sought some excuse for their conduct, as all murderers do; and, being politicians, they sought also an outward form or semblance of justice, having regard for the opinions of others of tenderer consciences than themselves.

Under the charge of the priests were a number of men who served as policemen in the Temple and its precincts. These were the servants of the high priest; and, armed with maces, swords and lanterns, they followed Judas, who knew beforehand that on this particular night Jesus did not intend to go to Bethany as usual, but purposed to rendezvous with His disciples in the Gethsemane olive orchard, or garden.

They brought Jesus directly to the house of Annas, a

superannuated high priest, whose son-in-law Caiaphas officiated in his stead. Annas attempted an examination of Jesus, but met with little success, and turned Him over to Caiaphas, whose house adjoined, being in the same courtyard. There, at probably three o'clock in the morning, the Sanhedrin had gathered.

The plot for Jesus' death was deeply laid. The hours between the time when Judas left Jesus and the other Apostles at the Passover Supper and the time of this trial were spent in gathering the Sanhedrin from their various homes throughout the city. Conditions were considered desperate enough to justify all this arrangement for the murder of Him who "spake as never man spake"--because He taught the people--because His teaching of the people was weakening the power of the Scribes and the Pharisees and of the traditions of the elders.--John 7:46; Matt. 26:55.

The theory of erroneous religious teachings is that ignorance and superstition are necessary for the preservation of sacerdotal power. Thus always has Error hated the Truth; thus always has Darkness hated the Light. The condemnation of Jesus was merely another triumph of Darkness over the Light. Yet it was a triumph only in appearance; for God's Plan was thus being carried out. The great Atonement for sin was thus being arranged for, the result of which will be the ultimate overthrow of sin, Satan and death, and the establishment of righteousness and truth worldwide and everlastingly.

AN INIQUITOUS TRIAL

The Sanhedrin was composed of seventy of the most influential Jews, an ecclesiastical court, whose voice properly had great influence with the Roman Governor, in whose hands lay, at this time, the power of life or death.

Caiaphas not only filled the office of high priest, but in this particular case he acted as prosecuting attorney. While gathering the Sanhedrin, he had not been forgetful to collect witnesses, who are said to have been suborned, or bribed, to give their testimony. Of course, no attempt was made to bring before the Sanhedrin any of those whom Jesus had relieved from the power of evil spirits, nor any of those whose blind eyes He had opened or whose deaf ears He had unstopped, nor any of those whom He had awakened from the sleep of death. The high priest knew, for instance, particularly about the case of Lazarus, but they desired no such testimony. They were bent upon murder, to be accomplished in an apparently judicial form.

Caiaphas called the witnesses, but found that their testimonies were self-contradictory; and it was a part of the Jewish Law that at least two witnesses must agree before any matter could be considered proven. Finally, two partly agreed that they had heard Jesus say something about the Temple--that He was able to destroy it and rebuild it in three days. They probably had misunderstood Jesus. However, their testimonies were too slight to make a basis for conviction.

As a last resort, Caiaphas attempted to get Jesus Himself to say something which he could construe to be blasphemy. To the various questions Jesus answered nothing; but now Caiaphas exclaimed, "I adjure Thee by the living God, tell us truly, Art Thou the Messiah?" It would not do for Jesus to keep quiet and fail to answer this question. To have done so would have been to deny this great truth and to have failed to give proper witness to the Sanhedrin. He therefore avowed that Caiaphas had expressed the truth in what he had applied.

Caiaphas leaped to his feet, anxious to grasp the opportunity of calling this statement blasphemy; but Jesus proceeded to say, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven." Affecting great horror at this, Caiaphas dramatically tore his priestly garment, as implying to the Sanhedrin that as a representative of God amongst them he had heard something awful indeed. Turning to the Sanhedrin, he inquired, "What further need of witnesses have we? Ye yourselves have heard His blasphemy. What think ye?"--What is your verdict? Their answer was, "He is worthy of death."

Apparently only two refrained from this vote--Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, both of whom had learned to have great respect for Jesus. But what power or influence could they have? At the very most, they could claim that the proceedings of the Sanhedrin were illegal, that the Law forbade that they should sit as a court to condemn anybody to death in the night-time. Hence Jesus was remanded to an adjoining court-room while the Sanhedrin waited to take its official action after daybreak. Meantime, in that waiting-hall, Jesus, condemned

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by the high priest as a blasphemer and malefactor, was subjected to various indignities by the attaches of the high priest's palace, who ignorantly supposed that whatever was done by the high priest must be right.

SUBMISSIVE TO THE DIVINE WILL

The Scripture which declares, "Ye have killed the Just One, and He doth not resist you," and the Golden Text of this lesson are in full agreement, and are both applicable to Jesus in these trials. Jesus opened not His mouth in the sense that He did not attempt to defend His life. Realizing that nothing was happening to Him contrary to the Father's will, He gladly permitted matters to take their course, without attempting to hinder the results.

Who can doubt that His brilliant mind, and His tongue, which "spake as never man spake," could quickly have brought such an argument for His defense that Caiaphas and the entire Sanhedrin would have trembled and would not have dared to condemn Him! He spoke only what was necessary to be said that the Truth might

be presented, and it was their own perversion of this Truth which His enemies styled blasphemy.

The Scriptures intimate that the followers of Jesus must not expect full justice in the world, nor always to be rightly understood. They, too, are to remember that the cup of their experiences, like that of their Master, is supervised by Heavenly Wisdom; and that if they are obedient to the Divine arrangement, they will find that all of their experiences will eventually work out to their highest welfare. "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God."

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SOWING AND REAPING

--NOVEMBER 8.--GALATIANS 6:1-10.--

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."--Verse 7.

TODAY'S Study was intended, by those who mapped out these lessons, to be a temperance lesson. There is surely a sense in which it is true that those who yield to appetites which crave injurious stimulants and narcotics will certainly reap a slavery to those appetites, a corresponding weakening of their own characters. All good people--all who have at heart their own welfare and the welfare of humanity--must surely deplore the ravages of intemperance; and any word or example that would be helpful to fellow-creatures, that would assist them to become strong characters and useful members of society, should not be withheld.

We may, however, be fully sure that nothing will completely and thoroughly liberate mankind from the weaknesses of their fallen nature, except God's appointed remedy--Messiah's Kingdom. But this conviction should not hinder us from taking our place publicly on the side of righteousness and of the best interests of humanity in respect to every question.

Let us not, on the other hand, go to the extreme which some would approve, but let us follow strictly on this, and on every subject, the teachings of the Bible. Following this course now, in this lesson, it is our duty to call attention to the fact that the Apostle's words have no reference whatever to intemperance of one kind more than another. The Apostle is not addressing the world in general; much less is he addressing some poor inebriates. He is addressing the consecrated people of God, as he declares in the opening verses of the Epistle.

These consecrated Christians the Apostle speaks of as brethren, and instructs them how they should deal with

any of their fellows who might be overtaken in a fault, who might become entangled with some form of sin, not by reason of sympathy with sin, but by reason of weakness of the flesh or by unfavorable environment. The most spiritual ones of the Church should exercise themselves to bring about a restoration of the erring one to a condition of righteousness and fellowship with God. This they should do in a meek manner, remembering that they also are imperfect in the flesh, and that they also may at some time or other inadvertently fall into sin, contrary to their heart intentions.

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In this manner they were to "bear one another's burdens" --assisting one another in battling against the weaknesses of the flesh and the besetments of sin. In this way they would be fulfilling the general law of Christ.

The law of Christ is a law of service and self-sacrifice in the interests of others. Those who, finding a brother overtaken in a fault, merely throw back their heads, denouncing the brother in a haughty, imperious manner, in a holier-than-thou manner, have not yet attained a proper appreciation of what is the Law of Christ--the law which is to govern all the members of the Body.

This law of Christ, the Apostle points out, is a Law of Love. Governed by this law of love, Jesus laid down His life, not merely for His friends, but even for His enemies. All therefore, who would claim to be disciples or followers of Jesus should have the same mind, the same disposition, the same spirit, and should seek to follow the same law of love. Thus the Apostle says, "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16) --in seeking to assist the brethren out of difficulty and to bring them nearer to the Lord and to His standards.

TOO MUCH SELF-ESTEEM

The Apostle points out that one great danger which besets all the true followers of Jesus is headiness--thinking too highly of self and, therefore, not thinking highly enough of the brethren, especially of the brethren who stumble in some particular in which this individual has not himself, as yet, stumbled.

One of the first lessons to be learned is that we are really nothing, that we are bundles of imperfection, that on the strength of our own merit we could not commend ourselves to God nor have His favor. Furthermore, we are to learn that in proportion as we think of ourselves as somebody, to that same extent we are not pleasing to God, and are in His sight all the more nobodies. If, therefore, anybody think of himself as a somebody in God's sight, he should begin to realize that he is nothing, a nobody unworthy of Divine notice, except through the favor of God in Christ. Such a person is deceiving himself and is hindering his own progress in the good way.

Each one, therefore, instead of seeking to judge or to reprove his neighbor or his brother in Christ, should seek to prove out his own work. He should carefully discern to see to what extent he has made progress in the things which God has declared will be pleasing in His sight. He should seek to ascertain to what extent he has put away anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, and to what extent he has put on the graces of God's Holy Spirit; namely, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

To whatever extent he can see that he is making progress along these Scripturally defined lines, to that extent he has ground for rejoicing, without in any sense or degree seeking to compare himself with others and thus

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to estimate himself wholly by the imperfections which he may see in others. By following this course, each should be seeking to find out his own weaknesses, seeking to bear his own burdens and seeking, therefore, not to be a burden or a reproach to others--either to the Lord or to the brethren.

Along the lines of this teaching, there is no room for clericism. Rather, as the Apostle says, "Those who are taught in the Word should communicate with those who teach in all good things," telling them of any blessings received or of any clearer views of the Word of God which have come to them. The Apostle may also have meant that those who receive blessings from a teacher may properly seek opportunity for recompensing that teacher, either with thanks or with co-operation or in some other way helping the teacher to forward his work of teaching in any good and profitable manner.

There is a principle at stake here. God operates along the lines of justice, and He cannot be deceived. His eye reads the heart, the motive, the intention. We might even temporarily deceive ourselves with specious arguments, but no one can deceive God. It is a principle of the Divine arrangement that sowing shall bring reaping, and that the thing reaped shall be of the same character as the thing sowed.--Galatians 6:7.

THE CHRISTIAN'S ARDUOUS TASK

The world does not engage in this sowing and reaping that the Apostle speaks of; only the Church do so. The Church is composed of those who have heard the Voice of God offering forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ to all those who become His disciples--offering also Divine assistance and the begetting of the Holy Spirit to a new nature and to glory, honor and immortality. All who have really and truly become followers of Christ, who have taken up their cross and have covenanted self-denial in walking in the footsteps of the Master--these alone are true Christians.

It is for these to order their steps in harmony with the Lord's leadings and to know that the results of their lives will be in proportion as they follow their Covenant of Self-sacrifice and faithfulness as disciples of Jesus. These have covenanted to give up the world, its aims, its objects, its ambitions--to sacrifice all these, that they may become "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" Jesus their Lord in the Heavenly inheritance.--Romans 8:17.

These should understand that it is not sufficient to agree to sow to the Spirit, but that the reaping of spiritual blessings and of heart development will depend upon their faithfulness in sowing to these ends. "He that soweth to the Spirit"--that is, he that lives a spiritual life, seeking to serve the will or Spirit of God in all of his words, deeds and thoughts--will reap the largest crop of spiritual development in the various qualities which go to make up the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, those who sow to the flesh--that is, who live after the flesh, seeking to please their own flesh, seeking to do according to their fleshly minds or wills, or seeking to please the fleshly minds or wills of their friends or relatives--these must only expect that in their case the flesh thus cultivated will grow the stronger in power to control their lives, and that they will make proportionately less progress along the lines of the Spirit.

In other words, the Apostle explains that every time we give heed to the fleshly inclinations of our fallen natures, we are hindering our own spiritual progress, and that the tendency of all such yielding to the flesh is toward corruption, toward death. On the other hand, to whatever extent we mortify the inclinations of the flesh and seek to live in harmony with the Spirit of the Lord, in that same proportion we shall grow strong spiritually, and be prepared for the everlasting life on the spirit plane which God has promised to those who shall demonstrate their love for Him and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness.

This does not mean that only those who attain the complete mastery of the flesh will receive any blessing from the Lord, but that unless we manifest to the Lord an appreciation of the spiritual things, we shall not make progress therein, shall not be fit for everlasting life and shall not receive it; whereas, on the contrary, if our conduct shall manifest to the Lord our love for truth and righteousness and our desire to please Him, however weak our flesh, He will account such worthy of everlasting life, knowing that when they shall have the perfect bodies of the resurrection, they will be glad to live in absolute harmony with the Divine arrangements. Thus the Apostle on another occasion wrote, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."--Romans 8:4.

FAITHFUL CONTINUANCE IN WELL-DOING

In verses 9 and 10, the Apostle draws his argument

to a conclusion. All who wish to do right--all who wish to live according to the lines marked out by the Holy Spirit through the words of Jesus and the Apostles--should not only start out well by making a full consecration, but should continue faithful, and not be weary of striving against sin and of being faithful to righteousness.

God is seeking to develop and to fix character in His people; and in due time, after they shall have suffered awhile, fought and battled for a time against the weaknesses of the flesh, they will reap the reward; they will get the new bodies that God has promised--the Resurrection bodies. Then their battling and trials will all be ended; for the new bodies will be in perfect accord with the new will, and there will be no cause of conflict between the two. The work of grace will then go grandly forward, through them, for the blessing of the world.

And, says the Apostle, let us not merely avoid harshness toward those who have been overtaken in a fault, let us not merely guard ourselves that we shall sow to the spirit and not to the flesh, and let us not merely avoid weariness in this good way; but let us additionally, "as we find opportunity, do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the Household of Faith." In so doing, we shall be copying our Heavenly Father's character. He is the Fountain of Blessing. From Him come the blessings of the present life--the sunshine and the rain--upon both the just and the unjust, upon the evil and the good.

As the Heavenly Father is continually giving blessings, rather than seeking favors, so we as His advanced and developed children are to seek to have the same character-likeness, the same disposition, the same mind; namely, a disposition to do good to everybody, but especially an earnest desire to do good unto all who are the Lord's children--unto all who are of the Household of Faith.

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"Go, labor on; spend and be spent--
Thy joy to do thy Father's will;
It is the way the Master went;
Should not the servant tread it still?"

"Go, labor on; enough, while here,
If He shall praise thee--if He deign
Thy willing heart to mark and cheer;
No toil for Him shall be in vain."

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ST. PETER SIFTED LIKE WHEAT

--NOVEMBER 15.--MARK 14:27-31,53,54,66-72.--

"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."--1 Corinthians 10:12.

ST. PETER was admittedly a man of strong character, very courageous, but rather too impetuous. He is one of the two disciples of whom it is written that "The people perceived that they were ignorant and unlearned men." (Acts 4:13.) In some respects, therefore, St. Peter may be said to have had less advantage than Judas. Both had equal opportunities in the School of Christ; yet how different the results with the two men! The one went down into the Second Death despised; the other, after ups and downs of trial and discipline, passed to a reward of glory, honor and immortality with his Master, ranking amongst the highest of the Apostles.

Our lesson for today deals with the special "sifting" which came to St. Peter at the time of our Lord's death, and of which he was forewarned by Jesus, saying, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." St. Peter's courage, manifested on so many occasions, was really his weak point. Notwithstanding all that Jesus had said to forewarn him of the sifting experiences that were just before him, St. Peter realized no dread, no fear. Hence he did little watching and praying in comparison with what he should have done, and self-confidence led to his undoing for a time.

It was the same St. Peter who, when told that he would deny our Lord before the time for the cock to crow the next morning, declared that it surely was a mistake, for he was ready to die with his Master. It was the same St. Peter who drew his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, afterward healed by Jesus. It was the same impulsive St. Peter who was the first to acknowledge the Messiahship of Jesus.

Jesus had inquired what people were saying about Him --who they said He was--and had finally asked, "Whom say ye that I am?" Then St. Peter answered, "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the Living God." Jesus replied that this answer indicated that St. Peter was in a blessed condition of relationship with God, or otherwise he would not have had the knowledge to make this statement. He said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven." Who could think that this same noble character would be so overwhelmed with fear that he would deny his Master, even with curses!

One thing which impresses itself quickly and forcibly upon our minds is the thought that the writers of the New Testament were certainly very different from the majority of writers in that they told the absolute truth without modification or varnish. Surely no other book is like the Bible in this respect. The founders of great religious

world-systems and of various sectarian systems have manifested a very different spirit. Their heroes are all great, noble, educated, heroic. Never would they think of pointing out such weaknesses as those manifested by St. Peter on the night in which our Lord was betrayed, when he denied his Master.

Surely this gives us greater confidence in the Bible-- in its honesty, in its truthfulness. We can rely upon the fact that the men who thus freely tell of their failings, and who speak of their lack of learning, must have been men of great courage, great sincerity, great love for the truth. Surely their testimony is worthy of all acceptance.

ST. PETER'S TRIAL UNEXPECTED

Temptations will come in an insidious form. We cannot imagine that at the time when he cut off the ear of the high priest's servant St. Peter had any sympathy with the thought of denying our Lord. But circumstances and conditions changed. The Master was taken a prisoner. Whatever power He had previously exercised whereby He walked away from His enemies, and they could not take Him because His "hour had not yet come," that power He evidently was not exercising now--His hour had come. To see his Master apparently without friends in Heaven, delivered over to His enemies and led from one tribunal to the other, had a paralyzing effect upon St. Peter.

St. John had such an acquaintance with some one connected with the palace that he was permitted to enter the court and bring St. Peter with him; but they had separated. St. Peter was in the courtyard. It was cold, and he approached an open brazier to warm himself. In the light of the court, surrounded by the gossiping servants of the palace, he was keenly scrutinized by one of the maids, who said, "Thou art also a disciple of the Nazarene."

Stunned by the identification and wondering to what it might lead, St. Peter promptly denied that he had any knowledge of Jesus. Then he moved away to another part of the court, where the shadows were deeper and the people fewer. But again he was recognized as a Galilean and accused of being one of Jesus' disciples. Again he denied the charge. The third time he was approached with the same charge that he was one of Jesus' disciples and a Galilean, and that his speech betrayed him. Again, with cursing, he denied that he knew his Master.

Terrible! we say. And surely St. Peter felt afterward that it was terrible; for just at that time, the early morning, came the beginning of cock-crowing, and he remembered the Master's words that Satan had desired to sift him as wheat, and that before the cock crew he would have denied his Master three times. The whole matter came upon him with crushing force; and, wrapping his cloak about his head, he hastened away into the darkness, weeping bitterly; for just about the time that the cock crew, Jesus was led forth not far from him, and as he looked at Jesus, the Master lifted up His eyes and looked

at St. Peter. It was a sympathetic glance, not an angered one; but it went straight to the heart.

St. Peter's crime was nothing like that of Judas; he had merely sought to protect himself. He had not sought to injure or even to risk the injury of his Master. The thoroughness of St. Peter's repentance is abundantly testified by his subsequent loyalty even unto death. Tradition has it that he was condemned to be crucified; and that, remembering how once he had denied his Master, he felt that it would be too great an honor for him to share exactly the same death as his Lord; and that, at his own request, he was crucified head downward.

THE LESSON TO ALL CHRISTIANS

Our Golden Text voices to all Christians the lesson of St. Peter's experiences--"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." When we are weak in our own estimation and, full of faith, cling tenaciously to the Arm of the Lord, then we are really strong in the might which God supplies through His Eternal Son. Another lesson is that however different the experiences of God's people, all who fall into line for the great promotion to the First Resurrection must expect to endure severe siftings, provings--of their love for the Lord, the Truth, the brethren, and their loyalty to all these.

Let us never forget that siftings are permitted, not because the Lord has no interest in us, but because only those who can stand siftings, trials and tests, are fit for places in the Kingdom.