

page 225

VOL. XXXVI AUGUST 1 No. 15
A. D. 1915--A.M. 6043

CONTENTS

"The Beginning of Sorrows".....227
What the Watchers Now See.....227
Is My Heart "Good Ground"?.....228
Four Hundred Million Tares.....229
Our Cleansing--Inward and Outward.....230
Saints Not Naturally All Noble.....230
God's Beloved Disesteemed.....230
Our Gradual Transformation.....232
The Perfecting of Holiness.....233
Faithfulness in Little Things.....234
Little Tests of Character.....234
Elijah a Great Prophet.....235
Responsibility of the Spirit-Begotten.....237
New Creature Does Not Practise Sin.....237
A Word of Pastoral Counsel.....238
Interesting Letters.....238
Re the Spirit of Division.....238
Some Eureka Y Drama Items.....239
A Most Satisfying Portion.....239
Awakened by Creation's Photo-Drama.....239

page 226

PUBLISHED BY
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
CHARLES T. RUSSELL, PRESIDENT
"BROOKLYN TABERNACLE," 13-17 HICKS ST.,
BROOKLYN, N.Y., U.S.A.

Foreign Agencies:--British Branch: LONDON TABERNACLE,
Lancaster Gate, London, W. German Branch: Unterdorner Str., 76,
Barmen. Australasian Branch: Flinders Building, Flinders St., Melbourne.
Please address the SOCIETY in every case.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$1.00 (4s.) IN ADVANCE.
SEND MONEY BY EXPRESS, BANK DRAFT, POSTAL ORDER, OR REGISTERED.
FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY.

Terms to the Lord's Poor as Follows:--All Bible Students who, by
reason of old age, or other infirmity or adversity, are unable to pay
for this Journal, will be supplied Free if they send a Postal Card
each May stating their case and requesting its continuance. We are
not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list continually

and in touch with the STUDIES, etc.

=====

ALSO FRENCH, GERMAN, SWEDISH AND DANISH EDITIONS.
SAMPLE COPIES FREE.

=====

ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MAIL MATTER AT BROOKLYN, N.Y., POSTOFFICE.
ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER AT THE POSTOFFICE DEPT., OTTAWA, CANADA.

=====

PORTLAND, ME., CONVENTION--AUG. 12-15

The Maine Central Railroad has announced reduced round-trip rate of fare and three-fifths, tickets on sale August 12-15, with final return limit August 17. Friends, however, should make inquiry in advance of their ticket agents to make sure that the agents receive from their headquarters the authorization to sell these special-rate I.B.S.A. tickets.

Requests for accommodations at Portland should be addressed to I. I. Margeson, Westwood, Mass.

=====

page 226

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

THESE STUDIES ARE RECOMMENDED TO STUDENTS AS VERITABLE "BIBLE KEYS." PRICES ARE NET AND BARELY COVER COST OF PRODUCTION.

SERIES I., "The Plan of the Ages," gives an outline of the Divine Plan revealed in the Bible, relating to man's redemption and restitution: 384 pages, in embossed cloth, 35c. (1s. 6d.) India paper edition, 75c. (3s. 1-1/2d.)

This volume has been published as a special issue of our journal at the extremely low price of 5c. a copy, in any quantity, postage included. (To foreign countries, 9c.) This enables people of slender purse to herald far and wide the good tidings in a most helpful form.

SERIES II., "The Time is at Hand," treats of the manner and time of the Lord's Second Coming, considering the Bible Testimony on this subject: 384 pages, in embossed cloth, 35c. (1s. 6d.) India paper edition, 75c. (3s. 1-1/2d.)

SERIES III., "Thy Kingdom Come," considers prophecies which mark events connected with the "Time of the End," the glorification of the Church and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom; it also contains a chapter on the Great Pyramid, showing its corroboration of the

dates and other teachings of the Bible: 384 pages, in embossed cloth, 35c. (1s. 6d.) India paper edition, 75c. (3s. 1-1/2d.)

SERIES IV., "The Battle of Armageddon," shows that the dissolution of the present order of things is in progress, and that all the panaceas offered are valueless to avert the predicted end. It marks in these events the fulfilment of prophecy, noting specially our Lord's great prophecy of Matt. 24 and Zech. 14:1-9: 688 pages, in embossed cloth, 35c. (1s. 6d.) India paper edition, 85c. (3s. 6-1/2d.)

SERIES V., "The Atonement Between God and Man," treats an all-important subject--the hub, the center around which all the features of Divine grace revolve. Its topic deserves the most careful and prayerful consideration on the part of all true Christians: 640 pages, in embossed cloth, 35c. (1s. 6d.) India paper edition, 85c. (3s. 6-1/2d.)

SERIES VI., "The New Creation," deals with the Creative Week (Genesis 1 and 2), and with the Church, God's "New Creation." It examines the personnel, organization, rites, ceremonies, obligations and hopes appertaining to those called and accepted as members of the Body under the Head: 750 pages, in embossed cloth, 35c. (1s. 6d.) India paper edition, 85c. (3s. 6-1/2d.)

The above prices include postage.

IN FULL LEATHER BINDING, gilt edges, the set (6 vols.) \$3.00, (12s. 6d.), plus postage, 60c. (2s. 6d.)

Also published in foreign languages as follows: German and Swedish, six vols.; Dano-Norwegian, five vols.; Greek, four vols.; Finnish, three vols.; French, two vols.; Hollandish, Spanish, Italian, Hungarian, Polish, Arabic, Roumanian, Chinese, Japanese, one vol. each; bound in cloth, uniform with English edition, prices the same.

For the Blind in American Braille, English Braille and New York Point.

=====

R5744 : page 226

GREEK AND POLISH "WATCH TOWERS"

Greek Brethren full of zeal for the Lord and the Truth have started the publication of THE WATCH TOWER in the Greek language. It is not set in type, but mimeographed.

Additionally, every other week they issue a translation of a portion of the Sixth volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES in the same manner.

The number of Greeks interested is not very large, but they are showing a very commendable zeal. Any Greek Brethren desiring to obtain the above-mentioned Greek translations will please address THE WATCH TOWER Office.

Our Polish friends, too, are preparing for themselves regular issues of THE WATCH TOWER in Polish--translations from the English edition. Sample copies on application.

page 226

=====

BETHEL HYMNS FOR SEPTEMBER

After the close of the hymn the Bethel family listens to the reading of "My Vow Unto the Lord," then joins in prayer. At the breakfast table the MANNA text is considered. Hymns for September follow: (1) 7; (2) 303; (3) 240; (4) 60; (5) 12; (6) 149; (7) 8; (8) 14; (9) 37; (10) 160; (11) 12; (12) 107; (13) 281; (14) 25; (15) 307; (16) 105; (17) 51; (18) 44; (19) 213; (20) 78; (21) 50; (22) 179; (23) 16; (24) 43; (25) Vow; (26) 329; (27) 195; (28) 204; (29) 188; (30) 176.

=====

R5735 : page 227

"THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS"

"Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness."
--2 Peter 3:11.

MANY in the past have misunderstood St. Peter's prophecy concerning the destruction of the present heavens and earth. They have inferred that he meant the burning up of the literal earth and heavens in a great conflagration. This thought seems to be embodied in all the creeds, Protestant and Catholic. Apparently there has been a serious mistake here. The Apostle is using these words in a figurative sense, just as we might say that a man would move heaven and earth to accomplish his designs. Throughout the prophecies of the Bible the heavens mean the ecclesiastical powers and the earth means organized society, including the financial and the political powers.

The things of the Present Order are soon to pass away--its banking institutions, its monetary affairs, its stocks and bonds, its politics, its great religious systems, indeed, the entire social fabric. The whole arrangement is now about to be melted down. An entirely New Order is about to come in. This melting down will begin in the overthrow of the religious institutions. To the whole world it will be an unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe; but to the true Church, watching as the Lord bade them to do, it will not be a surprise; for these are "children of the light," and this Day of the Lord shall not overtake them as a thief.

The Lord's faithful, watching people, guided by the Word of Truth, will have an understanding of temporal affairs. As St. Paul has assured us, though this Day shall come as a thief and a snare upon the whole world, it shall not so come upon God's children who are living up to their privileges. "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh"; "When ye see these things, ...know that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

(Luke 21:28,31.) The Master does not say, When ye see all these things, but When ye see the beginning of them, then we are to lift up our heads and rejoice--not rejoicing in the trouble, nor in the sufferings of others, but in the fact that these things are the foretold signs that the Present Order is about to be succeeded by a New Order, which will be far better, and more advantageous and desirable for all.

The Church herself will be the "new heavens," and will come into great glory, power and privilege. The thought in the early Church, evidently, was that these dispensational changes would very shortly come to pass. They were living in constant expectation of the coming of the Lord, the establishment of His Kingdom and the glorification of the Church. Some of them even felt too confident of the matter. The Apostle Paul writes to the Church of Thessalonica saying that some of them had made a mistake in thinking that the Day of the Lord might have already come. He tells them that that Day could not come until the Man of Sin should be revealed. Thus in the days of the Apostles the Church was ever on the qui vive; and throughout this entire Age the Lord's people have been left in uncertainty as to the time of the Master's Second Coming, watching, preparing, for the things of the Kingdom, knowing that the Day of Christ would come as a "thief in the night" at the appointed time.--2 Thessalonians 2:3.

WHAT THE WATCHERS NOW SEE

Now we who are living in this Day see the beginning of these foretold events. We see the prelude to the great Battle of Armageddon. Our thought is that the Armageddon itself will be the mighty "Earthquake" spoken of in Revelation. (Revelation 16:16-18.) In this great revolution and in the succeeding anarchy all earthly institutions will be swept away. The result of the anger, hatred and strife, if permitted to continue indefinitely, would be so terrible that it would bring about the destruction of the race; but for the Elect's sake, that they may begin their glorious reign, God will cut short the carnage, and will set up His own Kingdom under Christ and His elect Church. Christ and His Bride will take over the kingdoms of this world, and thus will hinder the strife of men from going to the extreme that it would otherwise go. But it will not be stopped until the Present Order shall have been wholly dissolved.

A vivid description of this awful Time of Trouble is given by the Prophets. For the benefit of our new readers, we give a few citations of such prophecies, which repay investigation. (Isaiah 24:17-22; 28:21,22; 33:7-14; 34:1-8; Psalm 18:7-19.) See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 4, pp. 15-20. Along this same line, read also Isaiah 13:1-13; Jeremiah 25:8-38; Revelation 18; 16:12-21. We believe that the present strife in Europe is very forcefully depicted in some of the prophecies cited

above, and that this is only the beginning of the great trouble and overthrow, the breaking in pieces of the

R5735 : page 228

nations as a potter's vessel. In our own land we see the portents of the coming trouble, in strikes, labor riots, I.W.W. demonstrations, etc. The Scriptures cited above declare in unmistakable language that the whole Present Order will go up in a mighty conflagration. The troubles not long since in the Colorado mines, the more recent strikes in London, Chicago, Bridgeport and Bayonne, are only premonitory rumblings which, with many other disturbances of like nature, presage the coming storm.

Selfishness is the great motive power of the world--if this thing is done or that thing is accomplished, something very advantageous to themselves will result. Because people want their own names to be great, they strain every nerve to accomplish that result. They do this also in political lines--trying to "feather their nests" for the future. In Europe they do the same along monarchical lines. Various Houses in power seek to have and to hold the honor of the people. The whole world are setting their hearts and minds on the things which will bring no real satisfaction in the end, and not upon the things of the Lord.

The Apostle points out that all these things that occupy men's minds and absorb their energies are to pass away. None of them are to be permanent. We realize this to be so. We see that their passing away is just at hand in this our day. Others do not perceive it, although many thoughtful minds see that present conditions are unprecedented, that some great change must be impending; and their hearts are failing them for fear.

Surely the knowledge of these things, of the transitoriness, the trifling value of the most alluring of earth's gifts, should cause us to turn from them and to set our affections and hopes upon the Heavenly things, which are infinite in value and which shall never pass away. We should lay up treasure in Heaven, where the institutions will be permanent, and where armies and revolutions will not destroy the Government. All those who believe in the great changes just before us should be living for the future and not for the present. The more we discern, then, the teachings of the Bible, the more we imbibe its spirit, the more shall we live for and prepare for the great blessings promised for the future to those who love God. "Be ye holy, for I am holy," is the injunction of our Father in Heaven.

HOLY ATMOSPHERE, NOT MIASMA, FOR NEW CREATURES

These directions are not to the world, and they are not to the flesh of the children of God, but are for us as New Creatures in Christ. The old creature being imperfect

has no standing with God; but there is nothing unholy in the New Creature, and the imperfections of his flesh being covered by the Robe of Christ's righteousness he has a standing with God. The difficulty which the New Creature encounters is the weakness of the flesh in which he must tabernacle for the present, and the danger of being misled, enticed away, from the things that are holy. Day by day he seeks to control the flesh and to bring it wholly into subjection.

The New Creature begotten from above, wishes to be holy and to keep his tabernacle holy. He breathes by nature a holy atmosphere; anything contrary is poisonous to this Heavenly germ which must be fostered and nourished with the greatest care. That it may properly develop it is necessary that it be fed upon "the finest of the wheat"; it is necessary, too, that the very thoughts of

R5736 : page 228

the brain and the meditations of the heart should be conformed as nearly as possible to God's perfect standard for these New Creatures. To this end rich supply is furnished by the Heavenly Father, who begat us to this new nature.

The child of God who is slovenly or careless in the management of his earthly body is not living in accord with true holiness, is not properly developing this Heavenly "seed" begotten within him. These New Creatures, so far as possible, should fellowship with one another. They are to seek to build one another up in the most holy faith. They are to remember that they are not to pull each other down, but are to endeavor to assist each other as far as they may be able. Whoever thinks to himself, "Sometime the Kingdom is coming, sometime the Time of Trouble will overtake the present order of things; but meantime we will enjoy the things of this world," will not be living up to his privileges, and will be very likely to be taken unawares as by "a thief in the night"; for he is not living in proper relationship with the Lord, and he will be likely to find when too late that he has lost the "prize."

"Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness"!

"My Father! my Father! this heart would be Thine!
Oh, keep it from wanderings!
Oh, visit and nourish Thy wilderness vine,
Though it be from the bitter springs!
Till the time of my trial and pruning is o'er,
And Thy child is safe on eternity's shore!"

=====

R5736 : page 228

IS MY HEART "GOOD GROUND"?

"That on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."--Luke 8:15.

WE RECOGNIZE these words as a portion of our Lord's parable of The Sower. A man went out to sow his field. As he scattered his seed, some fell on one kind of soil and some on another--some on thorny ground, some on stony ground, some on the hard, beaten pathway, and some on good ground. The good ground brought forth--some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold and some one hundred-fold.

According to the Master's interpretation of this parable, the good seed represents the Message of the Kingdom, which as it falls here and there appeals to some hearts differently from what it does to others. That seed falling upon the beaten pathway represented the Message as heard by persons into whose hearts it did not enter at all. They simply heard with the outer ear and forgot. It made no impression. The Lord said that the reason for this was that the Adversary came and caught the seed away. It had not penetrated even the surface of the hard ground. The conditions were not favorable for its entrance into the heart and the hearers soon forgot all that they had heard. The wiles of the Adversary would always, if possible, prevent the seed from entering the heart and taking root.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A SHALLOW HEART

Amongst those who do receive the Truth are the stony-ground class. These are at first very much enthused, but they lack depth of character. They are not the kind the Lord is now seeking. They will not bring forth the fruitage, for they have not sufficient depth for rooting. They are shallow. They desire to trim their sails in harmony with the favorable winds of this life. As soon as they find out that the Truth is not popular,

R5736 : page 229

they foresee persecution or social ostracism; then their ardor cools and their interest in the Harvest Message wanes and gradually dies out. Thus they are like wheat planted in shallow soil, which comes up and flourishes a little while; but when the hot sun comes out it withers away, not having much root.

The heart that is like the thorny ground is favorable as to soil. It is good ground, with fine prospects for developing the fruits of the Holy Spirit. But it is infested with thorns, which are not removed, but are permitted to remain and so choke the wheat. These thorns are not the frivolous pleasures of life--theaters, cards,

dancing, etc.; but, as the Lord explains in the parable, they are the cares of life, the ambitions of life, the deceitfulness of riches--perhaps the feeling that if they can accumulate wealth they can serve the Lord's Cause the better. This tendency to go out after other things allows a condition to obtain that is unfavorable to the wheat class. These may be good business men, fine politicians, or they may be immersed in some kind of study. Others of them may be fine housekeepers and have a pride as to how well things are kept, or they may be leaders in society or in works of reform, etc. All these are the thorns of the parable. A heart of this kind does not bring forth fruit, because the ground, while good, is otherwise occupied, and the Message of the Kingdom and its work are crowded out to a large degree, so that no fruit is brought to perfection.

HONESTY A BASIC QUALITY

Then we come to the "good ground" class of this parable, ground where the soil is not only good, but cleared of all noxious weeds which would prevent the proper growth of the wheat seed. This condition represents entire consecration to God. Everything which would hinder has been cast out. The cares of this life are not permitted to enter this heart and choke the Word. Such a one has made a bona-fide contract with the Lord and knows when he is keeping it; and he will keep it. He has the proper quality or depth of character and more or less of ability. And there is the special trait of thorough honesty, loyalty.

Amongst those of the class who are styled the "good ground," we find different conditions in life--not many noble, but some noble; not many great, but some great; not many learned, but some learned; not many wise, but some wise. But they must all be good of heart, and they must be honest, else they could not bring forth the necessary fruitage--honesty being the most important feature of all, with a degree of intelligence and appreciation of the Truth. We see, then, how this class might bring forth varying amounts of fruitage, according to circumstances, conditions and ability. But they are in the right heart condition to bring forth their very best--some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold and some a hundred-fold.

In the picture we see that the Truth is represented by the seed, and we see that the individuals are also represented by the seed. The thought is that a grain of Truth is planted, and that in an honest heart it produces a character which is in harmony with the Truth. That seed of Truth is the Message of the Kingdom, the Word of the Kingdom--not a truth about the philosophies of men or some scientific truth, but a particular truth--not something that ignores God's Plan and purports to be a better plan than that which God has arranged, but the one particular thing--the Word of the Kingdom.

FOUR HUNDRED MILLION TARES

It seems remarkable that with so many that are called Christian people--numbering now four hundred millions--they know so little about the Kingdom! The vast majority have learned but very little of it, if anything. This is manifest when we look over in Europe and see millions fighting to the death, when we realize that other millions are ready to fight here in the United States also. This is because they have not become New Creatures. As the natural seed enters the ground, sprouts and brings forth something that is fostered and developed by the soil, so the good seed of the Truth in the proper heart brings forth good fruit. The Message of the Kingdom brings forth results in harmony with its nature. It reaches the proper class and brings them to an attitude where God accepts them as New Creatures. These New Creatures are the children of the Kingdom; and these children of the Kingdom are the wheat that will be garnered. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom."

Our Lord in another parable shows us a different kind of seed--tare seed. This tare-seed looks a little like wheat. It is not the true seed--not the seed of the Kingdom. It may be a seed, or message, of morality or purity of life or total abstinence from intoxicating liquors, etc. No matter; it will not produce the Kingdom class. The only seed which will produce this class is the good seed, the true Kingdom Message.

As we look about in the world we see that the great Enemy oversowed this wheat-field of the Kingdom with false seed, the darnel, the tare-seed, as represented by these various messages that have gone forth throughout the world. This seed does not necessarily bring forth bad people. They are people who are workers for various things, some of them more or less good, but they are not children of the Kingdom. At the present time these tares are, many of them, influential. And the whole four hundred millions of them represent, not the true wheat-field, but merely an imitation, usurping the place really belonging to the true wheat class.

TIME REQUIRED TO DEVELOP FRUIT

In this Harvest time, now about ended, a separation has been taking place between the true wheat and the tares. The true wheat are being gathered into the garner, while the tares are being bound in bundles to be

R5737 : page 229

burned--not literally burned, but destroyed as tares, as imitation wheat. They will soon cease to call themselves Christians. They will recognize themselves as what they have always been--parts of the world. Many of these are Church members, but are purely of the world and its spirit. They discount the true wheat, and consider them

a little queer, fanatics.

Many of these tares do not know what they are. But those who have received the Message of the Kingdom into good and honest hearts will bring forth fruitage in harmony therewith. It requires time to develop the right fruit. This class grow daily in knowledge, in love, and are building one another up in the most holy faith. They also do good unto all as they have opportunity. This is the whole work which God is expecting of them. These are the ones who will ere long be gathered into the Heavenly Kingdom beyond the veil.

After the fire of this "Day of Wrath" shall have burned up this "present evil world," and burned out all the roots of pride, then will come the great time of blessing for the world of mankind. The great plowshare of trouble will prepare humanity for the great seed-sowing of the near future. It will take a thousand years to bring forth the glorious crop of the Millennium. Those gathered then will not be wheat, but the Restitution class; wheat being used in the parables of our Lord to represent the spiritual class, the saints of the Gospel Age.

=====

R5737 : page 230

OUR CLEANSING--INWARD AND OUTWARD

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."--2 Corinthians 7:1.

AGAIN we call attention to the fact that the Bible was not addressed to the world, but to the Church; not to unbelievers, but to believers; not to sinners, but to those who have already turned away from sin. Many overlook this fact, and the result is a confusion of their minds.

But some may, perhaps, be inclined to say that the words of our text are applicable to sinners as well as saints--sinners especially --even though the Epistle itself is addressed "unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints, who are in the whole of Achaia." We answer, No! our text cannot appropriately be applied to sinners in general, who have not yet come to God, who have not yet repented of their sins and been forgiven. God makes no appeals to such; He merely denounces them as sinners and refuses them all recognition, all fellowship, and tells them that there is no other name given under Heaven amongst men whereby they can be saved from their sins than that of Jesus--through faith in His blood. In other words, God refuses to have any dealings whatsoever with those who cannot or will not accept of the great Sin-Offering which He has provided. As Jesus expressed

the matter, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me."--John 14:6.

The reasonableness of the Divine position is evident upon reflection. God in the present Age is gathering out of the world a Little Flock, whose peculiar trait of character is faith in Him and a desire to please Him. In the Age to come, the Millennial Age, God purposes to deal with the remainder of mankind, and then all His requirements will be made so plain that the wayfaring man, though a simpleton, shall not err therein. (Isaiah 35:8.) The Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth in that glorious Millennial Day, and clearly manifest right from wrong, and show forth the Divine character and attributes, so that every creature may see--yea, all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears be unstopped, as is clearly stated by the Prophet.--Isaiah 35:5.

But now, in the present Age, there is a test of faith for this special Little Flock whom the Lord is selecting and whom He designates as His Church. Any who cannot exercise the faith cannot be of this elect Church, but must wait for their blessing at the hands of the Church during the reign of Christ, for which we still pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven."

SAINTS NOT NATURALLY ALL NOBLE

Not only has God made faith a necessary element of acceptance in the present time, but additionally, love of righteousness is made a part of the test. It is not enough that we should have the eye of faith which would recognize Christ's death as the Redemption-price for the sins of the world, we must additionally have hearts that love righteousness in order to come under Divine favor. The heart that loves righteousness discerns the weakness of its own flesh, its downward tendencies. The moment that heart recognizes Jesus as the Redeemer it flees to Him, not only to be covered with His merit as respects the sins that are past, but also to have the imputed covering of His righteousness as respects the unwilling blemishes and imperfections of the present and the future --imperfections that are contrary to the will and are the result of weaknesses inherited.

This class, not in harmony with the sin of the world nor with their own weaknesses, is referred to by our Lord in His message, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden [under the yoke of sin and appreciating its penalty, death], and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me." These learners--disciples, pupils in the School of Christ--are the class to whom the words of our text are addressed. It would be useless to exhort the world in general to cleanse themselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. The world is in sympathy with this very filthiness and has no desire to cleanse itself, has no just appreciation of how filthy it is in the sight of God and those who have His Spirit

of Holiness. The Lord describes the condition of the world as one in which anger, malice, envy and various lusts [desires] are the usual and normal conditions by turns. Lust, selfishness--which often amounts to brutality in its seeking of wealth, or pleasure or power--seeks to fill the natural mind, so that if it were taken away, with nothing substituted, life would lose all of its charms. Where would be the propriety in exhorting such to put away filthiness of the flesh and spirit when they have nothing as a substitute?

Some may, perhaps, urge that there are as many noble-minded people not believers as are found amongst believers. We answer, Yes! the Scriptures agree to this, assuring us that amongst believers are not many great or wise or noble according to the course of this world. The Message of God's grace often lays hold upon the lower, meaner and more degraded members of the human family rather than upon the noble, who feel less keenly their own depravity and less necessity for the Savior and His assistance. If, then, amongst the world are to be found some who are noble-minded, and if believers are generally of a lower stratum, how comes it that God has a more particular interest in these than in unbelievers? By what kind of rule does the Lord accept as children some who naturally are less noble and reject some who naturally are more noble?

We answer that the rule or standard of Divine acceptance is faith and obedience of heart. Those who with their hearts, their minds, their wills, turn away from sin and by faith accept the Divine arrangement, the Lord is pleased to accept according to their wills, their intentions, and not according to their flesh and its blemishes. Their unwilling defects according to the flesh are veiled from His sight by the Robe of Christ's righteousness covering them, to the extent of the inability of their new minds, which despise sin and seek to war a good warfare against it in their flesh and everywhere. Such is the class addressed by the Apostle in our text, saying, "Dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit."

GOD'S BELOVED DISESTEEMED

As the mouthpiece of the Lord the Apostle addresses all believers who have fled away from sin and who are striving to be pleasing and acceptable to God, as "dearly beloved." The Apostle, a noble-minded man himself, appreciated the fact that many of these dearly beloved brethren had weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh. He did not love them on account of these blemishes, but in spite of them--because at heart they were loyal to the principles of righteousness and striving to overcome sin and its inclinations in their own mortal flesh, and--so far as their influence would go--in the world. But the world does not love these whom the Father loves, whom Jesus loves, whom the Apostle loves. Our Master's

R5737 : page 231

words are, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and have ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, that your fruit should be permanent."--John 15:16,18,19.

The world does not like these chosen ones because, confessing their own weaknesses and striving against them, they call them by their proper names--sins, meannesses, filthinesses of the flesh and spirit. Every effort made by these to cleanse themselves is a reproof to others who are not striving to cleanse themselves, and who hate to be reminded that the things in which they

R5738 : page 231

take their greatest pleasure are greed, selfishness, inordinate affections, strifes, pride, vainglory. Whoever is fully satisfactory to the world may be sure that he is not satisfactory to the Lord. Whoever is satisfactory to the Lord need not expect to be satisfactory to the world; for the fellowship of this world is enmity to God, and, therefore, the world is not subject to the Divine standard, neither indeed can be, as the Apostle explains. (James 4:4; Romans 8:7.) Its heart is in the other direction.

The law of the New Creation--love for God with all our hearts and for our neighbor as ourselves--is to the world unreasonable, unthinkable, undesirable every way, and every reminder of it, even by the presence of those who at heart are on the side of righteousness, causes displeasure and discomfort. To these the Lord and His footstep followers have always been unwelcome--intruders. They prefer to be let alone, to have no suggestion offered to the effect that they are wrong. True, some of them have a pleasurable pride in generosity, a love of a good name, and a reputation for honesty and virtue. But they wish to be considered as standards and exemplars, and resent any intrusion, any measurements of their thoughts, words or deeds by the Divine standards. Therefore those who continually recognize and honor the Divine standards are disesteemed by them.

THE NECESSITY FOR CLEANSING

But why should the Apostle suggest that the Church should do a cleansing work in their hearts and in their flesh when we find that God has wholly covered these blemishes from His sight? If the blemishes are covered, why trouble about them further? Ah, there are the best of reasons! Those who at heart are loyal to the Lord

and His righteousness are distressed by their blemishes, their sins, the weaknesses of their flesh, even though they are aware that the Lord has graciously covered all these, and is not imputing their guilt because at heart they are opposed to them. The desire of this class is to build, to establish, character by faithfulness to principles of righteousness. They wish that their minds may become more and more established in faithfulness to the Lord and His Golden Rule of love; and that, so far as possible, the new mind shall control the fallen, imperfect flesh and bring it into subjection, into accord, with the Divine Law of Love.

Whoever, after having experienced the Lord's blessing in the forgiveness of sins, has no desire to war a warfare against them, and to bring into subjection to his new mind the powers and talents of his mortal body, has not the true spirit of sonship. He would thereby be giving evidence that he does not truly love righteousness, and that he does not truly hate iniquity. He would thus be testifying that he is not of the class whom the Lord desires as His sons on the spirit plane--as members of the Little Flock, the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

We see, then, good reason why the brethren should be appealed to by the Apostle in our text. We see a good reason why all begotten by the same Spirit of holiness should give heed to his words and make the cleansing of the flesh and of the spirit the principal work of the remainder of life. We see that unless they do this, they will belie their pretensions of love for righteousness and hatred of iniquity. We see that by such a warfare against the weaknesses of the flesh and of the spirit, the Lord designs that they should establish a crystallized character. Thus as the Scriptures express it, they shall be "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light" --fit in heart for the Divine service. Such as are thus fit in heart for the service of the Millennial Kingdom will, we are assured, be granted new bodies, free from all blemishes, in the First Resurrection. Thus, having perfected their minds and established character in their hearts in the present life by controlling the flesh so far as possible, they demonstrate that at heart they have the character-likeness of their Lord and Redeemer. Only those who do thus develop into copies of God's dear Son will constitute the Very Elect, the Kingdom Class, the Seed of Abraham, through whom the world will shortly receive its blessing.

"LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES"

The words, "Let us cleanse ourselves," do not have reference to our getting rid of Adamic condemnation. Such cleansing from original sin is impossible on our part, as the Apostle elsewhere explains. We cannot have it unless we receive it as a free gift from God. In what sense, then, do we cleanse ourselves? We answer that having been reckonedly cleansed by the Lord, and brought

under the influence of His Holy Spirit and the enlightening understanding of His Word, we are now invited to show our zeal for righteousness and to cooperate with Him in the work. While all the condemnation is reckoned as having passed from us, we still have the opportunity of showing the Lord what our spirit, our intention, would be, by striving against sin in our minds and in our flesh. The incentive to this cleansing is of the Lord, but the cleansing itself is something for us to do--"Let us cleanse ourselves." The cleansing work is a tedious one; for at first we did not discern how deeply defiled we were, how nearly all the suggestions of the mind were selfish. We did not even recognize selfishness as being sin.

As the eyes of our understanding opened more and more widely we got proper views of the Lord and His righteousness, our own conditions, the need of His covering Robe, etc. Day by day, as we have since striven to put away sin, selfishness--yea, every element of ungodliness and unloveliness--we have become more painfully conscious of how deep was the stain which we at first, perhaps, thought was merely superficial. Many of the Lord's people, after years of labor in seeking to cleanse themselves from the filth of the flesh and of the spirit, now, alas, see more of their own blemishes than they discerned at first, even though they have gotten rid of much of this natural filthiness, selfishness, etc. This would make the work of cleansing a very discouraging one if it were not for the assurance of the Lord's Word that He regards us, not according to the flesh, but according to our intentions, our desires, our endeavors. He reckons us as overcomers because of our good warfare against the natural blemishes, whatever may be the measure of our success.

The distinction which the Apostle draws between the

R5738 : page 232

filthiness of the flesh and that of the spirit should be noticed. After we have accepted the Lord, we take our stand with Him as the Captain of our Salvation, to be soldiers of the Cross and to fight a good fight against sin and all the works of the flesh and of the Devil. Soon we find ourselves in company with others of the same class, and naturally and properly begin to cleanse the flesh, to put away evil practises, outward wrongdoing of every kind. This is well. What fellowship could there be between children of the light and any works of darkness? Before long, in the case of many, a considerable outward change is manifested--careless language is avoided, passions are restrained, selfishness is curbed, at least in its outward manifestations. Neighbors and friends may see a considerable change. This is good, but not sufficient. We must also cleanse our spirits, our minds. It is not sufficient that we avoid outward wrongdoing. Our minds must be cleansed. We must learn to hate sin, to repel its first advances. We must learn that our minds

and our bodies are the temples of the Lord and that everything contrary to Him and His Law of Righteousness and Love must be barred.

Others are witnesses to some extent of our trials and triumphs of an outward kind. But the most important battles of the New Creation are those which are known only to ourselves and to our Captain--the battle of the new mind or will against the influences of the old, natural disposition. The true soldier of the cross will find this battle-ground quite sufficient to engage all of his combativeness and destructiveness and to keep him fully occupied. Such as are on the alert to develop the new character have much less time than others to criticize their neighbors, friends and brethren. They find enough in themselves requiring vigilance and restraint. And as they progress in this direction, they become more sympathetic toward others who have the same or other weaknesses and inclinations contrary to the Divine standards. They sympathize especially with the brethren of the New Creation, who similarly have given their all to the Lord and are battling against the world, the flesh and the Adversary, in their bodies and in their spirits.

OUR GRADUAL TRANSFORMATION

Those who have already come into relationship to the Father as children should remember that God's promises are that we shall be more and more received into His fellowship, have more and more of His blessing, in proportion as we are loyal to these principles with which we started out. If we have turned away from the world and from sin, and find that we have certain contaminations of the flesh, we should put all these away--even the taints of sin we should seek to put away. The more we energize ourselves in this direction, the more of God's favor shall we have, the more shall we be pleasing and acceptable to Him.

The Apostle in pointing out that there is filthiness of the flesh and the spirit, does not mean that the New Creature is filthy. The New Creature, as we are elsewhere told, is undefiled. The New Creature is holy. The word spirit is frequently used to represent mind. The will must be thoroughly changed before one can become a New Creature at all. And for the will ever to draw back would mean a drawing back unto perdition. To have a will for sin would mean that we had lost the Holy Spirit; that we are in the Second Death.

But the Lord's children have this new will, this new

R5739 : page 232

treasure, in an earthen vessel. We have a natural disposition toward sin. Additionally, we have minds that, even though they are putting away the things of sin, have more or less recollection of the things of sin, the impurities of sin. So while we draw ourselves away

from that which is sinful, we are to strive also to have our minds pure. We are to cast out everything in us that is sympathetic with sin. We are not to think of those things, we are not to permit ourselves to ruminate on what is sinful. We are to set our affection on things above.--Colossians 3:2.

As we fill our minds with God's promises, the whole character, the whole life, becomes more transformed. The Apostle says, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds." Our minds which were in accord with the earthly things, the earthly nature, are not only to be lifted from obedience to sin, but are to be turned in a new direction. Our minds are to be filled with holy thoughts--thoughts of the Lord and His service. When the mind is in a right attitude toward God, it is comparatively easy to serve the Law of God. The Apostle exhorts us to perfect holiness. We had the holiness started in us when we became the Lord's people. We gave ourselves wholly to Him--He never accepts a part. Our consecration is to do God's will wholly. We present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service. We started out saints; and the Lord recognizes none others than saints. Therefore we are to seek to live up to the Divine standard in all the conduct of life--our words, deeds, thoughts.

OUR CLEANSING AND THE LORD'S CLEANSING

But this perfecting of holiness goes on, this cleansing of ourselves, noticing to see where there is anything in us that is impure, and putting all that away from our conduct--and, more than that, putting it away from our minds. As we do this, holiness spreads through all the avenues of life. And so a Christian ought to have a very beautiful character. If any Christian has not a beautiful character, it shows that he has not been properly attending to the matter of his cleansing, daily giving attention to his purification in his outward relationship to mankind, and inwardly in his relationship toward God.

We are to do all this in the fear of the Lord, the reverence of the Lord. There is a difference between the fear that is reverential and the fear that is slavish. The reverential fear is a profitable fear. We are not to fear our Heavenly Father as if He were a devil, who would turn on us and treat us with cruelty; but we are to have a godly fear, which will delight to do those things pleasing and acceptable in His sight. So all this cleansing of ourselves, all this perfecting of ourselves in holiness, is with a view to being perfected in the fear of the Lord. Having begotten us of His Holy Spirit, having given us these precious promises, God will expect us not to put our talents into a napkin and make no progress, but to bring forth fruit--some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, some a hundred-fold. And as we do this, we shall be rewarded in proportion.

There is another Scripture which speaks of the Lord

as doing this cleansing work. "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults." (Psalm 19:12-14.) These words of the Prophet David are the sentiment of all the Lord's true people. By these words the Prophet showed his recognition of the fact that he was not capable of cleansing himself. He recognized that he might have secret faults that he did not appreciate himself--that he did not see himself. Perhaps he did not see some faults that others would see. He desired God to cleanse him from these. This indicated that he desired to get away from everything that was not in harmony with God.

This would be the proper sentiment for all Christians.

R5739 : page 233

We should pray to the Lord that He would show us whatever in our lives is not fully pleasing and acceptable to Him, that He would help us to see ourselves as others see us, and especially to see ourselves as He sees us. We believe that many of the Lord's people have been shown their imperfections and weaknesses (in the Lord's providence) by a very severe jolt. We ask the Lord also, as did the Psalmist, to keep us back from presumptuous sins, to cleanse us wholly from these.

"THE PERFECTING OF HOLINESS"

Our text declares that such a purification of flesh and spirit, body and mind, constitutes a perfecting of holiness. The thought here is that holiness cannot be attained in a moment, but that it must be gradually effected, perfected. A right view of this matter will hinder us from falling into certain dangerous errors. Holiness is not a charm which we may put in our pockets; it is not a garment which may be worn occasionally. Holiness resembles more the tempering of a piece of metal; it enters into the entire fiber, changing its general characteristics; it is transforming in its influence. True, there is a holiness reckoned to the Lord's people in the Robe of Christ's righteousness, which is granted to us when first we turn from sin, accept the Redeemer, and consecrate ourselves to God. But this is not sufficient. We must work into our characters that which we have willed--or, as the Apostle expresses it, we must allow the Lord to work in us the holy will, and the holy conduct which must necessarily accompany the holy will, as opportunity and conditions will permit.

But how is this holiness perfected in us? How does God work in us to will and then to do His good pleasure? Our text answers this portion of the question, too, assuring us that it is God's part to give us the promises; and that these promises constitute the incentives to those who are in the right attitude of mind. Without these Divine promises of the present and the future blessings, who would battle against his own weaknesses? Who would strenuously resist the attacks of the world and of the

Adversary? Moreover, who would willingly sacrifice his life and all his natural rights to serve the Lord and His cause, if there were no exceeding great and precious promises to quicken and energize him to the service of the King, in battling against sin, in assisting all who are on the side of righteousness? Surely there would be few, if any at all. And so our text intimates, saying, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves," etc. The promises are indeed the power of God unto our cleansing--our salvation--as pointed out by St. Paul.--Romans 1:16.

"GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES"

Looking into the context to see to what promises the Apostle refers, we find in the preceding verses the declaration, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Corinthians 6:17,18.) What a promise! What a suggestion!--that we, by nature defiled and imperfect, should not only have the notice of our sovereign Creator, but should be invited to become His children and be given the assurance of His parental affection for us --that "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence Him." How wonderful it seems! And then, as the Apostle elsewhere declares, this is not the end of the matter, but merely the beginning, for he says, "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."--Rom. 8:17.

Yes, it is this thought of what is implied in the term children of God, sons of God. The blessings and riches of the Father are to be extended through our Lord Jesus, especially to the Little Flock, which is now being selected from amongst men to be His Bride and associates in the Kingdom. These are not accepted into the Kingdom at once, but as it were on probation; as the Apostle says, "Now are we the sons of God; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be"--if we are faithful. As sons of God in the present life we have the joy of knowing of our Father's character through His Word, which we are permitted to understand, but which the world does not understand. We are assured of Divine supervision; so that not the slightest thing can happen to these sons except as their Father sees would be to their advantage. But they must show their love, their devotion, their oneness of spirit with the Father and the Redeemer ere they can be counted in as His Bride in the full, absolute and complete sense, and be granted a share in His glories.

It is to demonstrate their possession of these graces that these consecrated ones are left for a time in the midst of evil and unfavorable surroundings--to prove their love of righteousness, their opposition to iniquity, their love to God and their faithfulness to Him, their

love to all who are in sympathy with the Divine arrangement. If they stand these tests fully, it will mean that they will endure considerable opposition from the world, the flesh and the Adversary; and that they will be correspondingly strengthened by these experiences. It is this class to whom the Apostle refers saying, "If so be that we suffer [with Him], we shall also reign with Him." We are to suffer as He did for right doing, and because our neighbors and friends are blind as to what is the right, the proper course. We are to suffer gladly and joyfully whatever cup the Father may pour for us, knowing that He is too good to be unkind, too wise to err.

"Let us then, dearly beloved, cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." As the Apostle Peter declares, "If we do these things, we shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."--2 Peter 1:10,11.

R5742 : page 233

THE PILGRIM'S WANTS

"I want that adorning Divine,
Thou, only, my God, canst bestow;
I want in those beautiful garments to shine,
Which distinguish Thy household below.

"I want, oh, I want to attain
Some likeness, my Savior, to Thee!
That longed-for resemblance once more to regain,
Thy comeliness put upon me.

"I want to be marked for Thine own;
Thy seal on my forehead to wear;
To receive that "new name" on the mystic white stone,
Which only Thyself canst declare.

"I want so in Thee to abide,
As to bring forth some fruit to Thy praise;
The branch that Thou prunest, though feeble and dried,
May languish, but never decays.

"I want Thine own hand to unbind
Each tie to terrestrial things,
Too tenderly cherished, too closely entwined,
Where my heart too tenaciously clings.

"I want, by mine aspect serene,
Mine actions and words, to declare
That my treasure is placed in a Country unseen,
That my heart and affections are there."

FAITHFULNESS IN LITTLE THINGS

"He that is faithful in that which is least
is faithful also in much."--Luke 16:10.

WE HAVE in our text the statement of a great principle, one which could almost universally be acknowledged. Life's experiences have taught us that whoever can be trusted in little things can be trusted also in great matters. A man who is cautious in respect to small affairs is cautious also in important undertakings. One who is gentle in the little acts of every day life will be gentle on great occasions.

Our Lord applies this principle to His followers in a general way; and we believe it to be one of the most important lessons which the Christian can learn. There are many who are exceedingly careful about handling a large sum of money, but who are very careless in handling a small amount. There are those who are scrupulously exact as to large sums committed to their care, but who think nothing about the trifling amounts. But whoever cultivates a habit of carelessness about small things will be likely to become careless about large matters. On the other hand, whoever is careful of every dollar, every dime, who is careful to pay promptly every small debt, will be still more careful in respect to large amounts, large debts.

So it would appear to be a general principle in life that those who are careless in small things and careful in large matters will in due time or under great stress prove unreliable and unfaithful in everything, if such faithfulness should conflict with their own selfish interests. In other words, the trifles of life have an important bearing upon our character-building. Whoever learns to be conscientious about everything is being properly exercised by the lessons of life. We see this in our own individual experiences. Some are quite careless in regard to the rights of others; for instance, they would take without permission an umbrella belonging to another saying, "I want it only for an hour or so, and I will bring it back." Such a person is not properly conscientious about small things. One who would take an umbrella for even an hour has not sufficient principle to be trusted in larger things. Others will borrow articles, and forget or neglect to return them promptly, thus putting the owner to great inconvenience and annoyance. At best the habit of borrowing is deplorable.

The Scriptures tell us that our Lord is selecting a company to be with Him as under priests, under judges, under kings, to have control of the affairs of earth during

the thousand years of His Reign; and that whoever is chosen for this work must have special fitness, special character. Those who fully yield themselves to Him will be prepared for this important position; those who do not so yield themselves will not be prepared. Therefore our Lord gives us to understand that present opportunities are to be prized as opportunities for indicating what is our real attitude of heart. He makes it a condition that we cannot be His disciples unless we make a full surrender of ourselves to Him as our great Instructor, to be guided in all of our affairs in harmony with His will.

The Master tells us that no matter how small the affairs of life, we are to understand that the Father knows what are our needs; and that just as surely as He provides for the sparrows and the lilies of the field, so surely will He provide for those who are His children. Our Lord says to us, "Are ye not of more value than many sparrows?" Even while we were slaves of sin, the Father made provision for our return to His favor and to everlasting life, on condition that we obey Him and respond to His clearly specified terms. How much more will He care for us now that we have become His children!

HUMILITY ESSENTIAL TO SERVICE

Even in the smallest affairs of life we are to look for the Lord's will. The right attitude for us to maintain is this: I serve the Lord Christ; and whether it is a great work or a small one does not matter. "Therefore whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31.) The humblest kind of service is acceptable to the Lord if prompted by love. We recall the case of our Lord Jesus. When opportunity was afforded Him to talk with a poor Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, He did not say, "I came to preach the Gospel; and since this woman is only a Samaritan, I will not bother with her." When the disciples returned, they could not understand why the Master should be speaking with this woman instead of to a crowd. But Jesus, having the opportunity to preach, even if it were only to a Samaritan woman, improved His opportunity. He knew that through her the Truth might go to others; that what she would learn she would tell to her neighbors, and that when the due time would come the Samaritans might hear and be all the more ready to benefit by the opportunity.

Wherever we find the opportunity to present the Truth, we should appreciate the privilege. Of course we are not to annoy any one with whom we come in contact; but if there seems to be an opportunity to serve, it is for us to be about our Father's business, and to improve the opportunity--whether it is to speak the Truth or merely to give a kind word, etc. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; for He hath anointed me to preach Good Tidings to the meek." God is seeking those who are kind and sympathetic, desirous of helping others.

It is our privilege to give a cheerful word at all times. As a rule people have sad experiences. Often there is a worm at the core, the heart. It has been noted that those who have committed suicide have sometimes laughed and joked a little while before taking their lives. The world would be in a terrible condition if everybody told all his troubles and carried his heart on his sleeve. It is better that they hide their troubles and that we cover ours from sight. It is better to cultivate the spirit which sings:

"Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

LITTLE TESTS OF CHARACTER

We should esteem it a privilege to address wrappers for tracts, or whatever the opportunity of the hour may be in the Lord's service. Should some one say, "I would rather preach," we reply, If the Lord opens up the way and gives you an opportunity to preach, do so. And if you have several opportunities to preach in one day, whether to one person, or to ten persons, or to a thousand, make use of them. But if you do not have any opportunity to preach, you may have the privilege of addressing wrappers. In this way you are instrumental in helping to place reading matter in the hands of others, even if the postman is the one who takes it to the house where it will be read. Or if our work is in the kitchen or any other part of the home, it is service of the Lord if we do all as unto Him. But He kindly gives us opportunity to do something for the brethren.

So whatever we do, we are doing it for the Lord, we are doing it as unto Him, doing it as He would have it done. There is a way of looking at things that makes us feel happy. It is a good thing to ask ourselves occasionally, What am I seeking? What is my motive in doing this? For whom am I working?

R5740 : page 235

As we thus work for the Lord and strive to please Him, and cultivate the spirit of thankfulness for service in the little things, we shall be proving our worthiness for the great things. Our desire to render faithful service to the Lord will manifest itself in economy in the home and in consideration for others around us. Whoever will strike too many matches, or who will strike matches on the walls of the house, is thus manifesting that he is not fully trustworthy. Whoever whistles around the house to disturb others, or who gets up at a very early hour and makes so much noise that others cannot rest, or who comes in late at night and goes noisily to his room, demonstrates that he has not learned to observe the Golden Rule, has not learned to respect the rights of others.

The very beginning of all our conduct as members

of the Body of Christ should be the observance of the principles of justice. We should think as to what are the rights of others and as to whether we are impinging on those rights. If we find that we are so doing, we may know that we are violating the law of justice. In every circumstance of life, justice must come first, and afterwards we may be as kind and generous as possible.

"LORD, IS IT I?"

In respect to spiritual matters the principle is the same. Little rifts in the lute spoil the music. God is seeking a very special class for the Kingdom. He desires those who will be absolutely loyal to Him, loyal to His Word, faithful not only in some great thing, but also in the smallest affairs of life--faithful in thought, word and deed. Whoever is thus faithful, whoever exercises care in all these respects, will be fitting and preparing himself for the Kingdom. Whoever is careless and inattentive to little things is not fit for the great honor the Lord has in store for the wholly faithful. He is watching us closely, but with a kindly eye. He wishes us to succeed. He gives us the necessary instruction and guidance. When we practise carefulness in little things, we are thereby developing our characters along right lines. If we fail to do this, we shall never become fit to be entrusted with important matters. Let us each make this a personal question: What kind of character am I developing as the days go by?

But the Christian who makes a mistake, and who sees his mistake and makes what amends are possible, will find his experience beneficial to him--perhaps throughout the remainder of his life. Through the castigation which he imposes upon himself he will learn greater carefulness. Care and watchfulness are necessary, and

R5741 : page 235

we should see to it that they extend to every affair of life--to the use of our time, our talents, our money, etc. Whatever we have of these is from the Lord and belongs to Him. We should therefore carefully consider what we shall do with these opportunities and be very conscientious in the use of them--how much we shall use for ourselves and how we shall use the remainder. Our course in these matters will show to the Lord whether or not we are fitted for a place in glory.

Our use or abuse of all the talents, great or small, entrusted to us by the Master will demonstrate how careful we are to note His will and to do that will in respect to this feature of our stewardship. By and by He purposes to give to the faithful those things which will be of far more value than dimes and dollars; affairs of great responsibility will be committed to them. If any have not been faithful--if any one has thought of the time, the dimes, the dollars, etc., as being his own, and has

so used them, that one will not be of the class the Lord is seeking. He is viewing us according to the Covenant of Sacrifice which we have made with Him. (Psalm 50:5.) If we had a million dollars, it would be only a small thing in His sight. It is the manner in which we use the things of this life that manifests our loyalty to the Lord and that demonstrates how we would use the Divine power during the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom, for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Our grandest opportunities for service are comparatively insignificant. But we are to appreciate even the least service which we may be able to render. We are to esteem that our service here is not to be compared with the things which the Lord has in reservation for those who love Him. For a thousand years they are to reign with their Lord; and then will follow the ages to come during which He will show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward them through Christ Jesus their Lord. (Ephesians 2:7.) In view of this future inheritance of the saints in light, is it any wonder that our Lord wishes us to have kind, just, generous hearts? Our opportunity of being in the Little Flock will depend largely upon our appreciation of our opportunities for serving the Lord in the little things of the present life.

=====

R5741 : page 235

ELIJAH A GREAT PROPHET

--AUGUST 29.--1 KINGS 17:1-16.--

A FAITHFUL SERVANT OF THE TRUE GOD--ELIJAH A TYPE OF THE CHURCH--THE ANTITYPICAL ELIJAH--THE ANTITYPICAL JEZEBEL AND AHAB--THE ANTITYPICAL 1260 DAYS OF SPIRITUAL FAMINE--REFORMATION BY SECTS--THE LATEST REFORM MOVEMENT.

"Casting all your care upon Him;
for He careth for you."--1 Peter 5:7.

ELIJAH was a great Prophet. This fact is evidenced not only by the account of the Old Testament, from which our lesson is taken, but also by the words of Jesus respecting him, and the words of the Apostle James. (James 5:16-18.) He comes to our attention as the Lord's mouthpiece to King Ahab, of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel. He brought the king a threat of famine, assuring him that there would be no rain nor dew upon the land of Israel until Elijah would pray God for it. This meant drouth, famine, trouble. Elijah was not making this declaration on any authority of his

own, but because it was the Divine Program and he had been so directed of the Lord. True prophets of God are not boastful, and never take honors or powers themselves. They speak merely as Divine mouthpieces.

The reason for such a trouble, chastisement, coming upon King Ahab and the nation of Israel was that it was intended to be corrective, and additionally, as we shall see, it was prophetic or typical. The Israelites had gone into idolatry, and King Ahab had cooperated and had been a leader. The prophets of God had been persecuted, and the prophets of Baal had been honored. A great national chastisement might do them good. Accordingly, as stated in the first verse of our lesson, the issue was plainly declared to the king by Elijah, who then was directed to go to the brook Cherith.

This brook is in the mountainside, on the roadway leading from Jerusalem down to the Dead Sea, near the

R5741 : page 236

place where the Jordan enters it. It was a lonely spot, and is now marked by an ancient convent. There, for three and a half years, the Prophet made his home, away from the public, and was fed by ravens, which brought him bread and flesh morning and evening. The water of the brook slaked his thirst. As the drouth continued, the brook finally dried up; and the Prophet was directed to the home of a widow of the town of Zarephath--beyond Israel's border, in the land of Zidon.

Jesus referred to this incident, remarking that the woman was a Gentile, and that the sending of Elijah to her implied that she was more worthy of the blessings he accorded than were any of the widows of the land of Israel. (Luke 4:25,26.) The poor widow had but a remnant of meal whereby to make a few cakes to sustain herself and her son; but at the Prophet's suggestion she had faith enough to share her little remnant with him. The result was a miracle. The remnant continued, as the Prophet had declared, throughout the famine. "The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord which He spake by Elijah."

ELIJAH'S ANTITYPICAL PROPHECY

As already suggested, Elijah's prophecy was larger than on the surface appeared; for he and all of his doings were a type on a small scale of greater things which came afterwards. Elijah was a type of the Church in the flesh--the Church of which Jesus is the Head, and all of His saintly followers are the members. It was of this antitypical Elijah that God declared, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the children to the fathers, and the heart of the fathers to the children; otherwise I will come and smite the earth with a curse."--Malachi 4:5,6.

Jesus and His Apostles, and all of His followers, as the members of this greater Elijah, actuated by the Spirit of God, have been delivering a Message to the world. They have been reproving sin, and making known to the world the righteousness of God. If the world had heeded the Message, the Kingdom of Messiah on the spirit plane would eventually have been ushered in, as the desire of all nations, without any great Time of Trouble, or "Day of Wrath," being necessary. But the world has not heeded the Message of Jesus and His followers; and hence the smiting of the earth with a curse, the blow of the great Time of Trouble now beginning, is the only way by which Messiah's Kingdom can be ushered in.

The nations, having accepted a form of godliness merely, and without the power and spirit of it, are Christian nations merely in name, not in fact, as the present great war for commercial supremacy of the world abundantly demonstrates. By this war and by the great revolution which the Bible declares will follow it, and by the world-wide anarchy which will result from the revolution, all the kingdoms of the world will be overthrown and all the present systems and institutions will be ground to powder, that the way for Messiah's Kingdom, and its place, may be prepared. What did not come through obedience to the Truth will come through the overthrow of those who heard but neglected, perverted and distorted the Divine Message of "Peace on earth, good will to men."

FULFILMENT OF THAT PROPHECY

That God meant Elijah to be a type of the Church is confirmed to us by certain statements in the Revelation. The matter is there covertly presented, a great religious system being figuratively described as Jezebel, and the worldly system to which this professed Church of Christ is united being represented by Ahab, the king of Israel. In this figure, as Elijah fled from Jezebel and Ahab's power for three and one-half years, so the Church is said to flee into the wilderness to a place prepared for her, where she is miraculously sustained of the Lord for three and a half "Times," or symbolic years, otherwise explained as 42 months, or 1260 days.--Revelation 2:20-23; 12:6,14; 13:5; 11:2,3.

That long period of time when the true Church was eclipsed by the success of Babylon marked the time of great spiritual drouth. As during the time of Elijah's absence at the brook Cherith and in Zidon there was no rain, so with the world, during those 1260 years there was no spiritual rain, no refreshment from on High. During that long period the Word of God, the Bible, was suppressed and neglected. The Bishops, Catholic and Protestant, suppressed it because if the people paid attention to the teachings of Jesus and the Twelve Apostles whom He appointed (St. Paul taking the place of Judas), they would proportionately ignore the teachings of the

bishops who falsely proclaimed themselves "apostolic" bishops, and arrogated to themselves the power and authority which Jesus declared belonged only to The Twelve. These Twelve our Lord declared to be the twelve stars

R5742 : page 236

to guide the Church (Revelation 12:1), and the twelve foundation stones of the glorious New Jerusalem, which is about to be established.--Revelation 21:14.

It was during that dark time that there was a famine in the land, as mentioned by the Prophet--not a famine for bread nor a thirst for water, but a famine for the hearing of the Word of the Lord. (Amos 8:11,12.) According to the Bible those 1260 years of drouth began with the year 539 A.D., when ecclesiastical power attained persecuting ability, and ended in 1799 A.D., as its persecutions came to an end, at the time of Napoleon's great victory, when the pope was taken prisoner to France.

In another sense, however, the 1260 years would very properly extend from the year 325 A.D. to the year 1585 A.D. It was in the year 325 A.D. that the self-styled apostolic bishops convened under the patronage of Emperor Constantine, constituted themselves the Ecumenical Council of Nice, and formulated the first of the great creeds, the Nicene Creed. From that time onward for 1260 years the Bible was neglected; for the creeds made by these so-called apostolic bishops were accepted as instead of the Bible, as brief and comprehensive statements of its teachings, which alone were to be believed. Any one thereafter studying the Bible was esteemed to be finding fault with the creeds, and was correspondingly condemned. The creeds were studied, and the Bible thereafter was neglected.

It was during that long period of 1260 years that the egregious errors which have since troubled mankind became interwoven with the creeds of the Dark Ages. And it is since those 1260 years ended that the reform movement has prevailed--not a satisfactory reformation, according to the Bible, but a reformation by sects. Misguided by the thought that the Church should be one of outward organization, each reformer gathered his followers to him and started a new sect, which claimed to be the true Church. Undoubtedly the Adversary had much to do with the organization of these various denominations, which nowhere have authority in the Bible. (1 Corinthians 1:11-13; 3:3-5.) In recent times Christian people are realizing that none of these is the true Church of Christ, which is composed only of saints; and they gather to the Lord, irrespective of denominational lines of any kind.

=====

R5742 : page 237

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

"Whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not."--1 John 5:18.

WHEN attempting to explain spiritual things, there is always a difficulty, particularly because we have only human words with which to express ourselves. Therefore, in order to make spiritual things clear, the Scriptures give us various similies and other figures of speech. In this text the Apostle John speaks of those who are begotten of God, those who have experienced a change of nature, who were first begotten according to the flesh, as children of Adam, and who have been begotten again--begotten of God. (1 Peter 1:3.) Since our Lord's resurrection, God has been inviting some to come out from the world and become New Creatures--no longer human beings, but spirit beings.

The first step toward this change of nature is the receiving of a new will. But we can see that it is a mistake to call the new will alone the New Creature; for the new will comes to us before we receive the Holy Spirit. It is the new will that presents our sacrifice. If we did not have the new will, we would not present our bodies a living sacrifice. The next step is that of the Redeemer's becoming a Surety for this sacrifice and for the attainment of the new nature. The third step is the Heavenly Father's acceptance of this sacrifice, of this slaying of the earthly nature by the Redeemer, and His giving of a special sign of His acceptance. That special sign of acceptance is the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

It is very necessary that we keep the new human will separate and distinct from that which we receive at the begetting of the Spirit. We had the new will first; we desired and purposed to do God's will. Then we approached the Father in the way He had arranged--through our Redeemer. It is the new will that makes the sacrifice. The offering being presented, the merit of Jesus is applied, and thus the sacrifice becomes at once acceptable to the Father. Up to this point the will of the individual is still a human will, a new human will. The offering is then slain by the High Priest, our Lord Jesus, the acceptance of the Father being marked immediately by the begetting of the Spirit.

Just what God does at this juncture we do not fully understand. We do not understand clearly what a natural begetting is, though we have better means of understanding the natural begetting than of understanding the spiritual begetting. As to the spiritual begetting, we have the Divine expression that it is the starting of a new life. The one receiving it gains a supernatural illumination. Thereafter he is a changed person, a new person, a New Creature. He is now in Christ Jesus.

He has new hopes, aims and objects, and is more and more enabled to apprehend spiritual things as the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit operate upon his mind.

But all this is something that cannot be explained to those who have not taken the necessary steps by which spiritual things may be understood. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:9-15.) Not until we have received this Heavenly illumination can we discern spiritual things. Nor do we at first discern them in the way of appreciating them fully. Spiritual discernment grows from a small beginning. "Old things have passed away and all things have become new." These old things pass away, not instantly, but gradually; and the starting point is marked by this expression, "begotten of God."

NEW CREATURE DOES NOT PRACTISE SIN

To be begotten of God, then, is to receive the beginning of a new life, a new nature. The Apostle John declares of such, "Whosoever is begotten of God doth not commit sin [doth not practise sin--Diaglott]." (1 John 3:9.) So long as these are under such holy control, inspired by the great and precious promises, and possessing the holy will, they could not sin wilfully--could not practise sin in their lives.

We are to distinguish between a wilful sin and being overtaken by a fault. The reference in our text is to wilful sin, the practise of sin. The New Creature cannot sin because it is the Heavenly seed, the seed of the new nature. Every flower, every animal, sprang from a seed of life. However infinitesimal the seed may be, however embryotic, life is there. Likewise with the Christian; so long as any of the holy mind of God is present, there is life. But if he sins wilfully, this holy seed is dead. If this seed perish, the individual is dead as a New Creature. Nothing would then await the individual but the Second Death; for he had been lifted out of the first, or Adamic death, and to die again would mean that he had come under the extreme penalty of God's Law a second time. This would be an individual sentence, and would be eternal. Such would be "twice dead," as the Apostle Jude puts it--"plucked up by the roots."--Jude 12.

So we see the Apostle John's meaning--whoever is in the spirit-begotten condition, whoever has this embryo of the new nature, could not sin wilfully, could not take pleasure in sin, could not give himself over to sin. To do so would signify that he had lost this Holy Spirit, and that he had become unholy again. As St. Peter explains, it would be like the sow that was washed returning to her wallowing in the mire. The Apostle John says that one begotten of the Holy Spirit will "keep himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not." He not only will not sin wilfully, but he will keep constantly on guard,

watching himself, just as a watchman guards the castle or the city or the house. He watches all the doors, all the avenues of access.

THE NECESSITY FOR VIGILANCE

This thought of setting a watch over ourselves, of keeping ourselves so that the Wicked One cannot touch or injure us, suggests another thought: The Lord Himself is the great Center of righteousness, purity, truth. All who are on the side of righteousness, purity, truth, will shun sin, will have no fellowship with it; for even if we should not really enter into sin in act, if we have any sympathy with it, we would be to that extent out of harmony with the Lord. As in a circle the nearer to

R5743 : page 237

the center the greater the safety; so it is with the circle of righteousness, whose Center is Jehovah Himself.

The slightest sympathy with sin would cause the child of God to depart to that extent from the Center of purity. As he widened the distance between himself and the Lord, he would draw nearer to the outer rim of the circle. Think of an island surrounded by water infested with crocodiles. The person who would remain in the center of the island would be perfectly safe from those enemies. But the nearer one approached to the coast line, the greater his danger. So Satan is represented as a wily foe; and to the extent that any of us would not watch himself, he would be getting nearer to the circumference of that circle. Any sympathy with what is not in the fullest harmony with the mind of the Lord, any participation in sin, would carry him closer and closer to the place of danger. The intimation of the Scriptures is that such

R5743 : page 238

a one would be in great danger of being touched, caught, by the great Adversary and his demon host, to his injury, perhaps to his ruin.

Presumably every Christian has had something of this experience of drawing near to the place of danger. In proportion as we live near to the Lord, we are under Divine protection. In proportion as we waver in our loyalty, we come nearer to the Adversary. One might thus endanger himself without actually sinning. His heart might still be true to the Lord, yet he might be touched by sin by being involved with others in some way. Therefore the Word of God warns us to watch our actions, to watch our companionship, our conduct, to abide "in the secret place of the Most High," to "make straight paths for our feet," lest that which is weak and lame be turned out of the way. Rather, let it be healed, by keeping very close to our God, as far away as possible from the point of danger.

A WORD OF PASTORAL COUNSEL

WE NOTE a strong similarity in some respects between our spiritual and our natural experiences. We must partake of food if we would have strength. For the New Creature in Christ, God's Word has provided this necessary food--milk for babes, strong meat for those of greater development. As we feed upon the gracious promises of God's Word, they strengthen our hearts and nerve our energies for patient endurance and active service for the glory of our King, for the blessing of the brethren, and for our own spiritual upbuilding. We perceive that one great lack amongst Christian people in general is that very many have ceased to partake of the spiritual food which the Heavenly Father has provided for the nourishment of His people. Many, therefore, are weak and sickly spiritually; and many have fallen asleep in respect to spiritual matters, having become overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches, money-lust, and the excitement of business and pleasure.--Mark 4:18,19.

Since we have come to a knowledge of Present Truth we find our spiritual appetite sharpening more and more. We are growing day by day by means of the nourishment supplied. We love the strong meat. We take delight in masticating it. A work of Bible study is progressing all over the world, the like of which was never before known. The Classes of the I.B.S.A. are becoming known for their knowledge of the Word of God, collectively and individually. The world, especially the "Christian world," is taking knowledge of them.

But here we need to note dangers threatening these Bible Students. And these dangers we especially call to the attention of the Class leaders. The first is that it is true in respect to spiritual feasting as in respect to natural feasting, that we need liquids as well as solids. By solids we refer to those spiritual foods which require mastication, mental assimilation, investigation, etc. From these we derive our strength. The liquid refreshments correspond more particularly to our spiritual fellowship which is non-doctrinal; namely, exhortation, praise, worship, testimony respecting the Lord, our personal relationship with Him, His gracious providential care over us, etc. The Class that neglects the liquid refreshments is sure to feel the loss. As the physical system requires the liquids to carry the nutriment properly to all parts, so the spiritual organism requires the liquid refreshments to carry the strength of the nutriment of the doctrines of Christ to every member for the mutual refreshment of all.

Again, it is noticed that while both solids and liquids are needed, it is preferable not to use the two at the same time. He who washes his solid food down with liquid refreshment fails to get all the nutriment out of it, because he masticates less. As the process of digestion is begun in the mouth, where the saliva is mixed thoroughly with the food, the washing of the food down with liquids interferes with an important part of digestion. Therefore, all physicians advise that little liquid be taken with the solids, but that at appropriate times a sufficiency of liquids be supplied to the system. So we advise in the spiritual eating--that the solids, the doctrines of the Word of God, be thoroughly masticated, with comparatively little of testimony or exhortation intermingled--just a little of praise and worship to give a proper setting. Then let the spiritual liquids be appropriated in full measure at suitable seasons.

=====

R5743 : page 238

INTERESTING LETTERS

RE THE "SPIRIT OF DIVISION"

DEAR BRETHREN:--

Last month we wrote you asking for separate Pilgrim visits, and we have your reply of June 25th suggesting the possibility of our triumph over the "spirit of division," and stating your intention of making suggestion to the _____ Class that a portion of the time of the visiting Pilgrim brother be given to us.

For your letter we wish to thank you, and to thank our Heavenly Father whose providences are over us. We do not want to have the spirit of division, and we continually search our hearts for that which we must overcome, and do continually pray and study the Word for the Holy Spirit in our hearts, and for the spirit of a sound mind. We will welcome reproof, correction, guidance, as the Lord may send it.

By the favor of God we have one chief desire: to be in accord with His will, to make our calling and election sure, to love and serve the brethren--and all in His way. Day by day our most earnest desire for these things increases, and we are determined to be His children wholly, believing His promises, believing these things are His will for us. In humility and thankfulness we testify that we are being dealt with as sons. So, if it should be the Father's will, we do desire to have the Pilgrim brethren visit us, and our request was made if we know our hearts, without a thought of complaint against or criticism of others.

The regular _____ Class was organized before our coming into it; the leaders have an established policy, so to speak. From time to time it has seemed to us that the Scriptures, and our Pastor's faithful interpretation of them, were not being followed, which developed to an issue between us, and

we quietly resigned and withdrew--absolutely without harshness, with words and thoughts of love. We continually pray for each of them, we yearn for them and miss them, and search our own hearts to see if we can find bitterness or wrong that must be gotten out.

Our consecration is to God our Father, as we will it, and not to anything or anybody else. We will to choose His way, and pray for wisdom to see it and grace to walk in it, and we wish for fellowship with the Pilgrim brethren to this end alone. No class meetings are held here with the Pilgrims --the meetings being either public or semi-public--and we feel the need of heart-to-heart meetings with these brethren, at times when there will be no outsiders present.

Our withdrawal from the Class was not hasty, but only prompt when the choice was necessary as to whom we must follow. It is not our thought to recite a grievance--we have none--nor disappointment, nor hurt, nor regret; for the ordering is of the Lord, and we are rejoicing in His providence.

So in this matter we are thankful in advance for what shall be done. All of the children of God are so safe! and we have very great cause for blessing and praising His name,

R5743 : page 239

feeling we shall be cared for. I have tried to write from the heart--sincerely. If you have any further suggestion or counsel, or if nothing more be considered necessary, we shall think it well.

Looking over into the Land, the tabernacling days nearly over, the world in fear, the way each day yet narrower, how could we have time or inclination to quarrel with the brethren! I pray your hearts may be continued in patient endurance; we daily speak of you in love and sympathy. God bless you!

In Christ, faithfully yours, _____.

R5744 : page 239

SOME EUREKA Y DRAMA ITEMS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Having had so many good experiences and rich blessings connected with the EUREKA Y DRAMA and Colporteur work, particularly this Spring, we wish to advise you of some of them.

And then our recent visit to Chicago, where we had the privilege of hearing you and others speak encouraging words to Harvesters, reinforced by personal talks with many, has stirred us further to write you.

Two brothers and sisters are now working Peoria and Knox counties (Ill.). The brothers travel in a wagon--a real DRAMA wagon. In this they carry all their baggage, besides the DRAMA machines, sleeping tent and cooking utensils. Between towns they canvass the farmers, which helps financially. When money sales cannot be made, books are frequently

exchanged for eggs, butter, vegetables, bread, grain for their horse, etc. In this way, opportunities frequently come to present the Truth to a class who have not hitherto been reached.

We two sisters have a little more expense traveling on trains, but this is soon offset by the sale of books in the towns. We canvass during the three days in which the DRAMA is shown, and often exchange books for room and table board.

The Colporteur work in these ways we find much more interesting and blessed. We find, too, as others have, that the trouble in the world is waking people up and they listen with interest to our message.

We show the EUREKA Y in three parts, thus averaging six entertainments a week. Our audiences number from fifty to three hundred; many of these are from the country. Sometimes we have had the use of very good halls free, other times paying only a small sum. The carbide light is used where there is no electricity and it works successfully at a very small cost--about fifteen cents per entertainment. We are now planning to give some open-air exhibitions in parks.

Our EUREKA Y is practically self-supporting. We have talked with several who have the EUREKA Y lying idle because of lack of funds, and thought these few items would be of interest and help to others.

We realize every day the great privilege of the Harvest work, particularly at this time, and that our sacrifice is very small compared with the blessings with which our Father rewards our humble efforts. We give Him thanks and praise for every manifestation of His great love and for the increasing light as it is presented in THE WATCH TOWER. We also thank Him for that faithful and wise Servant, and pray richest blessings upon him. With much Christian love,

Yours in joyful service, EMMA ANDERSON.

A MOST SATISFYING PORTION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

I want to try to tell you how greatly I have been blest by your precious ministry through THE WATCH TOWER of April 15th last. Every article in it was of the richest spiritual food; but the first one, "The Sum of All Graces," has been especially helpful to me, as I was already seeking more earnestly to cultivate love, desiring greatly that I might be so filled with the sweet spirit of love--with love itself--that it would just naturally yield its own fruitage in my life. Your analysis of love's component elements in this article, particularly the first two, "Love is patient," and "Love is kind," and the seventh and eighth, "Love is good-tempered," and "Love is guileless," was a most satisfying portion to my hungry heart. As I have read and reread them my very soul yearned within me; and my desires became stronger, and hope and faith brighter.

Then when I came to your proposition that we pray every morning that the Lord will bless us in the cultivation of love

throughout the day, and report to Him at night, I resolved to do so with greater zeal and earnestness than ever before. And so the next day, while full of trials peculiar to my natural disposition, I was blessed with victories beyond anything I ever enjoyed before. I am still practising with marked progress.

I want to tell you, dear Pastor, that while I have been blest in taking the "Vow," and making the "Morning Resolve" my own, and by the many helpful suggestions that have come to us from your consecrated heart and head, yet this one has brought me more joy, more victory, greater triumphs over my weaknesses than anything else.

What a blessing it has been to watch through the day for opportunities for cultivating love even in my thoughts; and then at night how sweet to rejoice before the Throne of Heavenly Grace because of victories gained, and to humbly acknowledge His gracious provision for the forgiveness and cleansing for any failures made!

I wish I could tell you how rich my experience has been every day since I took this more determined stand, after reading this TOWER. I am so glad that you intimated that we might write you of our progress; for I have wanted so much to express my Christian love for you, and my growing appreciation of your labor of love for the Lord's people. I am sure the saints are refreshed and helped by you continually.

Praying the Lord's blessing on you continually as you seek to bring forth the meat in due season for the Household of Faith, I am

Your Sister by His grace, MRS. A. L. RYALS.--Georgia.

AWAKENED BY THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

We write to apprise you of the fact that a class of Bible Students of this town have organized as an Ecclesia--24 members --Brother W. Sargent of Halifax officiating; and have voted you in as Pastor and Elder. Five Deacons were chosen from the Class.

Your PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION awakened us when it was given in this town last August. We met together just after that to study "The Divine Plan of the Ages," and shortly, "We who sat in darkness saw a great light."

Our class of Truth seekers steadily increased until now we number over 50 regular attendants besides many irregular ones. Out of this Bible Class 24 have made a full consecration of their life to the Lord; and we, who six months ago "were not a people," are now a people of God. A few of us had lived the consecrated life for some years; the rest came out of the world's people, some with socialist, others infidel tendencies, etc. We are indeed grateful to our Heavenly Father and His Son our Redeemer and to you for this precious Harvest Truth which has reached our ears late in this acceptable Day of sacrifice. But thank God, at last "we have found Him of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote," yea, the Apostles, too; and now the Word of God from

Genesis to Revelation has become luminous and we are finding it a mine of precious treasure.

We want you to know that this class in this little corner of the world have the utmost confidence in you as the Lord's faithful servant, used to deliver His Message, in spite of the fact that from every pulpit in this town and the adjoining city of Sydney you and your teachings are being denounced as worse than false. We are consumed with a desire to spread this Truth; and though sometimes we cast our pearls before swine that turn again and rend us, yet many people find it good news and seek for more. Praying the Lord's rich blessing upon you, we are

Yours in The Christ,

ECCLESIA AT GLACE BAY.--Nova Scotia.

CREATION DRAMA UPSETS BELIEF IN SPIRITISM

MY DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:--

I feel I must write and tell you that the beautiful CREATION DRAMA, shown at the Opera House, Kings Way, has entirely changed my life.

I believed in Spiritism, and when I discovered the fall of the Nephilim, before the flood of Noah's day, and read about it, my belief was capsized at once.

I have bought two of the SCENARIOS, two sets of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and a lovely Bible. I also get THE WATCH TOWER. I thank God for all His goodness, and may He bless you for all your good works. I pray that many others may be brought home through your instrumentality.

I have already found a dear friend in the Truth, and hope I may be enabled to do good work as she does, in a village to which I am soon going.

Thanking you so much and praying God to bless and keep you, I remain

Yours faithfully,

K. SMITH.--England.

=====

page 240

International Bible Students Association Classes

STUDIES AND LECTURES UNDER THE AUSPICES OF PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION

=====

page 241

VOL. XXXVI AUGUST 15 No. 16

A. D. 1915--A.M. 6043

CONTENTS

Privileges of the Throne of Grace.....243
 Manner of Acceptable Prayer.....243
 Selfish Petitions Unjustified.....244
 "Blessed Are the Pure in Heart".....245
 Fault-Finders, Accusers of the Brethren.....245
 The Final Issue--Life or Death.....246
 Jehovah Our God is One.....247
 Confusion of Trinitarian View.....249
 Making Friends of the Unrighteous Mammon.....250
 Trespasses and Sins and Their Effect Upon
 Character.....251
 The Sin Against the Holy Spirit.....251
 Elijah's Return and Victory.....252
 Elijah's Flight and Vision.....254
 What the Antitypical Elijah Sees.....254
 Fulfilment of the Vision Begun.....254
 Interesting Letters.....255
 "Watch Tower" References Re Tabernacle
 Shadows.....255
 When Their Happy Life Began.....255

page 242

PUBLISHED BY
 WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
 CHARLES T. RUSSELL, PRESIDENT
 "BROOKLYN TABERNACLE," 13-17 HICKS ST.,
 BROOKLYN, N.Y., U.S.A.

Foreign Agencies:--British Branch: LONDON TABERNACLE,
 Lancaster Gate, London, W. German Branch: Unterdorner Str., 76,
 Barmen. Australasian Branch: Flinders Building, Flinders St., Melbourne.
 Please address the SOCIETY in every case.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$1.00 (4s.) IN ADVANCE.
 SEND MONEY BY EXPRESS, BANK DRAFT, POSTAL ORDER, OR REGISTERED.
 FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY.

Terms to the Lord's Poor as Follows:--All Bible Students who, by
 reason of old age, or other infirmity or adversity, are unable to pay
 for this Journal, will be supplied Free if they send a Postal Card
 each May stating their case and requesting its continuance. We are
 not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list continually
 and in touch with the STUDIES, etc.

=====

ALSO FRENCH, GERMAN, SWEDISH AND DANISH EDITIONS.
 SAMPLE COPIES FREE.

=====

ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MAIL MATTER AT BROOKLYN, N.Y., POSTOFFICE.
ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER AT THE POSTOFFICE DEPT., OTTAWA, CANADA.

=====

The "Wright Bible" is permanently out of stock.

All Cheques, Drafts, Money Orders, etc., should be made out to Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. There are no exceptions to this rule.

"CREATION" SCENARIO, SPECIAL PRICES

In July 1 issue we gave a very special price on the paper bound SCENARIO--ten complete (30 parts) for \$1.00, including postage.

We have an extra supply of the De Luxe \$1.00 edition. We offer these at once--two for the price of one; postpaid. Get them into the hands of the public.

I.B.S.A. CONVENTION NEAR HARRISBURG, PA.

In our next issue we hope to give full particulars re an eight days' convention at a beautiful, quiet spot near Harrisburg, Pa., September 5th to 12th inclusive. It has a fine Auditorium and other conveniences. Terms \$1 per day, upward. Apply at once.

=====

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

Week of September 5...Q. 57 to 61 Week of September 19..Q. 70 to 80
Week of September 12..Q. 62 to 69 Week of September 26..Q. 81 to 89

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

=====

R5744 : page 243

PRIVILEGES OF THE THRONE OF GRACE

"Let us therefore come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that

we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."--Hebrews 4:16.

WHILE these words of the Apostle have always been applicable to the people of God, they are especially important to us, for we realize that we are now living in this very evil day to which he referred in his letter to the Ephesians; that it has already come, and that only those who have put on the whole armor of God will be properly equipped to withstand the assaults of the enemy. His instruction that the Christian supply himself with the whole armor of God indicates a need for the armor, a difficulty in withstanding the attacks to be expected in this day, and the fewness of those who will eventually stand. The exhortation is not to take merely the shield of faith, not merely the helmet of salvation, not merely the breastplate of righteousness, not merely the Sword of the Spirit, not merely the sandals of preparation, not merely the girdle of Truth; but all of these. The implication is that we shall need all of these if we stand all the assaults to be expected in the evil day.

Alas, how few seem to realize the importance of this armor which God has commended! Their difficulty is the result of their not recognizing the time in which they are now living, of their not being sufficiently awake, of not being zealous to search the Scriptures, and to arm themselves therewith for the battle of the Great Day of God Almighty.

But with all the preparation the earnest Christian may make, he should see to it that there is a direct and continual communication between his heart and his Lord. In the Bible God has given us His Message, His promises, His instruction, in advance. Elsewhere St. Paul has declared that this Word "is sufficient, that the man

R5745 : page 243

of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." We appreciate this assurance and also realize our own unworthiness, our littleness and our imperfections. But despite all these our Lord has assured us that we may approach with courage the Throne of Heavenly Grace and there obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need--and forgiveness of sins.

This promise of forgiveness does not include the thought of original sin; for that is forgiven us at the time when we consecrate ourselves to the Lord; and therefore it need not be remembered day by day. But, having surrendered our will to the Lord and having started out in the narrow way, we should know what our reasonable service to Him would include. (Romans 12:1.) We have need of every provision that He has made for us. It is our daily transgressions that require daily forgiveness. Any one, therefore, who would

be a good soldier of the Lord Jesus must keep in close touch with Headquarters. This he is privileged to do by coming daily to the Throne of Grace.

If we would contrast the privilege of approaching God with that of approaching earthly potentates, we would see a marked manifestation of God's favor to us. With the King of England or the German Kaiser or any other earthly sovereign, the dignity of the throne is maintained so that it is difficult for any to approach. One must earnestly desire to do so. And if he would come into the king's presence, he must wear a certain style of dress, observe a certain etiquette, and also have a proper introduction. If the king were gracious, an interview might then be granted. But our God, the Mighty Creator of the Universe, has graciously granted to each one who has been begotten of the Holy Spirit the privilege of bringing everything to Him in prayer --all his needs, all his difficulties--and of calling Him by the endearing name of "Father." What wondrous grace!

Then each of God's children before approaching the Throne of Grace should seek to know what things are approved of the Lord and what things are disapproved. It should be the one ambition of the child of God to know the Father's will and to guide his affairs accordingly. But taking it for granted that our hearts are fully submissive to the Lord's will, the Apostle is here describing the Christian soldier who has put on the whole armor of God, or who is putting it on, and who is seeking to come up to the highest standard. He will need, with all his armor, to cultivate and to use the privilege of prayer.--Ephesians 6:18.

THE MANNER OF ACCEPTABLE PRAYER

The foregoing reference tells us how prayer should be offered--"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." We should lay emphasis on the words "in the Spirit." Contrast this sort of prayer with others which are not "in the Spirit," but merely formalistic. We know that the heathen have great formalities in their prayers. The Chinese, for instance, have a wheel on which certain prayers are inscribed, and they think that the more times the wheel is turned around the more times the prayer goes up to their god. These are vain repetitions. But the Chinese are heathen--they have not learned of the true God. Others approach the

R5745 : page 244

true God, using vain repetitions, not knowing what they want or what is best for them or what is God's will. Some Christians use printed forms of petition which are not really their own sentiment or spirit, but which as worshippers they offer to the Lord in a more or less perfunctory manner. Some prayers are represented by beads. These are used by our Roman Catholic friends.

Each bead represents a prayer, and the repetition is supposed to help the worshiper. He counts these beads over and over, repeating his prayer over each bead.

All these endeavors on the part of humanity, heathen and Christian, to approach God in prayer indicate that there is a recognized need of Divine assistance. But God is not to be approached in a merely formal manner. He is not to be mocked. If we should approach an earthly king in such a perfunctory way, he would see through the hollowness of the petition and would resent it. And so we may know that if we come with merely a lip service to God our prayers will not be heard. We must remember, too, that only those prayers are acceptable to God which come from those in covenant relationship with Him through our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way by which we have a right to come to the Almighty addressing Him as "Our Father."

Reverting again to the text, "Praying always, with all prayer and supplication--in the Spirit," we understand the Apostle to mean that with every prayer we offer, whatever may be our petition, there should be an earnestness of spirit. The prayer must always be offered "in the spirit," with heart-appreciation of what we are doing. Otherwise it would not be acceptable to God. It must be a "supplication," an earnest entreaty. When we pray to God, we are to "watch thereunto, with all perseverance" --having importunity in prayer, not soon growing weary if our petitions do not seem to be quickly answered. We are not to pray for the things that the Word of God does not justify us in believing are the Lord's will, but for the things which we believe are His will; and we are to really desire what we ask for. Then we are to watch for the fulfilment of our prayers, and thus be prepared for the blessing when it comes. Our Father knoweth what things we have need of before we ask Him.--Matthew 6:32,8.

SELFISH PETITIONS UNJUSTIFIED

The object of prayer, then, is to benefit ourselves, and to bring us into that attitude of mind which will be in heart-readiness to receive our Father's blessing. God does not wish to give His choicest blessings where they would be fruitless. When He gives us these blessings, He purposes that our hearts shall be in that condition which will assimilate them and bring forth fruitage. We must ever be in an attitude of full submission to His will. We know that our Heavenly Father not only has the fullest knowledge of our needs, but is waiting to bestow His richest gifts upon His children, as soon as we are ready for them. Then let us never come before Him with vain, meaningless repetitions.

While the world would pray merely for food, clothing, temporal blessings or for victory over their enemies, we as God's children should yield up our wills to Him and pray in the words of our Master's exemplary prayer:

"Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done." Then, "Give us this day our daily bread," whether it be little or much--not saying what kind of food, but simply receiving what He sees we need. We have placed these matters entirely in the Lord's hands. We ask especially for the spiritual Bread. Our prayers are to be along the lines of the Spirit and not of the flesh. We are to pray only incidentally for the earthly things, because we have consecrated our bodies to God. Since the body is to die, since it has been accepted as a sacrifice, we are to seek to perpetuate that body which we have given to the Lord only long enough for our spiritual development and testing and for the completion of whatever work He has for us to do. We are also to be willing and glad to surrender it as soon as the Lord is ready to consummate the sacrifice. We have it now only as the instrument of the New Creature.

As New Creatures, then, we are to pray always in harmony with the interests of this new nature. We are to hunger for the Bread from Heaven and to feed upon it. We are to develop the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. We read that the Father is more willing to give good things to them that ask Him than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. So then, we are not only to pray in the Spirit, but as the Lord's Word indicates, our prayers are to be along the lines of the Spirit, of the New Creature, whose needs are first in our sight and in the Lord's sight, and whose interests the Lord is especially pleased to bless and to have us consider and pray for.

THE CHRISTIAN'S VITAL BREATH

The logical conclusion of all this is that the Lord's consecrated people would have little to pray for of an earthly kind, realizing that with the Church the end is not restitution, but sacrifice unto death, and then the glorious resurrection. Therefore the prayers of the consecrated should be for grace to meet in a faithful spirit our various trials and difficulties while we are putting on the armor, and likewise after we have put it on, and are learning how to use the Sword of the Spirit, how to resist the Adversary, and the foes entrenched in our own flesh--our Philistines. We need much grace to be rightly exercised by the trials and the assaults of the enemy and to realize that all these things are to work together for good to us who love God, who are "the called according to His purpose." We are learning day by day how to "make our calling and election sure."

The Lord's people are encouraged to take part in the prayer meeting, and individually they are to approach daily the Throne of Grace. Our Lord has declared that where two or three are met together in His name He will be in their midst. When a petition is made having something of general interest, we are to unite our

hearts that the blessing may be spread abroad and extend to many hearts. The suggestion is that the Lord's people should do considerable of their praying in fellowship, in cooperation. But this would not hinder our private praying to the Lord, hourly if need be, telling him of our realization of our faults and our weaknesses and asking for the application of the precious merit of our Savior's sacrifice to remove every spot and every wrinkle from our garments. Such prayer is the very essence of the Christian's life, his "vital breath."

We find that the encroachments of the Adversary and of the world and of the flesh are liable to discourage

R5746 : page 244

us or to entangle us with the things of the present life. But the Lord has made it so possible for us to approach Him that we can go to Him with any trial, any difficulty, and be sure that our petition has Divine attention and will have Divine aid. We have spoken of our fleshly weaknesses as sometimes hindering us from prayer. There is a disposition on the part of many Christians, after having done something that has wounded the conscience, to avoid going to the Lord in prayer for awhile, to dread to go, to feel ashamed to go--

R5746 : page 245

thinking that they will feel better about it afterwards. This course is fraught with great danger; for it is likely to hinder our spiritual growth. Therefore it should not be permitted. We should realize that there is all the greater need of our going then to the Throne of Heavenly Grace. The Lord has known of our weaknesses in advance. He knew beforehand of our failure, and wished us to profit by the experience, that we might, in harmony with our prayers, become stronger against sin, against everything displeasing to Him.

ONE OF SATAN'S CHIEF METHODS OF ATTACK

The Adversary has to do, no doubt, with seeking to interrupt our prayers, our communications with the Father. One of our hymns declares that

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

We need not go to this extreme of thought, that Satan really does so tremble; but we may know that he realizes something of the power of prayer in the life of the child of God, and one of his chief lines of attack is to seek to cut off our communication with the Lord. Just as in warfare a skilful general seeks to cut off the enemy from its communication with headquarters, with its base of supplies, so with Satan. If he could succeed in cutting

off our communication with the Heavenly Courts, we would be so much more liable to fall under his mischievous and wicked assaults. Then we would indeed be helpless, without Divine direction.

Is it asked, What could Satan do to cut off our communication?

We reply that there are various ways of intruding upon the human mind--thoughts may enter the mind while the child of God is at prayer or at other times--thoughts of business, of pleasure, of sin, of worldly interests and projects, etc. We do not know how much power the Adversary is given in connection with the Lord's people. We do know that he is powerless to interfere with their will. But he has power to stimulate certain organs of our minds, so that unless we are very alert we might be cut off from proper fellowship with the Lord, and our Christian courage might become more or less weakened. Thus we would be proportionately less able to resist the world, the flesh and the Adversary.

It is, therefore, proper to take every precaution to keep the lines of communication with our Heavenly Father well open. For instance, in private prayer, if there is a tendency toward drowsiness or toward thoughts going to other things, then we might lift the head, if it be bowed; or if the eyes be closed, we might open the eyes, and raise them. We are to see to it that in all our prayers and supplications these are in the Spirit, that they are not perfunctory, not formalisms. We are to see to it that they are the real expressions of our heart. We may say that a few sentences of real heart-prayer will accomplish more good for the child of the Lord than any amount of lip service. We advise that any who have difficulty in keeping the mind concentrated while in prayer should rather intensify and shorten their petitions and that in all their prayers they should see that the things they desire and pray for are in harmony with the Lord's Word--in the interest of the New Creature.

=====

R5746 : page 245

"BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART"

"Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful is nothing pure; but both their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to have known God, but by their works they renounce Him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work worthless." "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

--Titus 1:15,16; Proverbs 4:23.

OUR first text is an extremely severe arraignment.

The context seems to imply that the Apostle Paul was addressing some who

were identified in a sense with the Cause of God, but whose doctrines and manner of life were in conflict with the Message of the Gospel. Whether he referred to unbelieving Jews or to those who had at least outwardly become followers of Christ we may not be sure. He was referring, at any rate, to those who professed to have known God, whether they knew Him through the Law or through the Gospel. The language seems to imply that these were fault-finders. They could find fault with everything--nobody could do anything just right, no doctrines were right. We have all met people of this character--people who see nothing pure, nothing good, anywhere, and who are denouncing others all the time.

The Apostle's statement is very strong, very forceful--"Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful is nothing pure." We understand him to mean by these words, not literally that the pure could find nothing that is impure, nor that the impure could find nothing pure, but that this is true in a broad, general way. Those who are themselves pure can see righteousness in the Divine Law and in the Divine arrangement. They can see the true, pure hearts of God's sincere "little ones," in spite of the weaknesses of their fallen flesh. But the unfaithful become defiled, their consciences become perverted, so that they are unable to see anything or anybody in a proper light. They have permitted ill-natured thoughts to enter the mind and lodge there--suspicions, evil surmisings, such as, "Every man has his price. Every man can be bought. There is not one that is honest"; and all that sort of thing. They have been more or less judging others by themselves.

Not only the minds of such become corrupted, seeing nothing pure, nothing good, nothing right, in others; but their consciences become defiled. At first the conscience of such would to some extent reprove them. But gradually, if they yield to this wrong heart attitude, their consciences become corrupt and hardened, so that they do not realize that they are prevaricating, misjudging, do not see how unjust, impure and blind they have become. "They profess to have known God," says the Apostle--knowing something in an intellectual way about His Plan and Word--"but by their works they deny Him." Their works are contrary to God's Word, which instructs that all should seek to do all the good they can, to see all the good they can, and to give generous judgment to others.

FAULT-FINDERS, ACCUSERS OF THE BRETHREN

These defiled ones deny God, renounce Him in their works--as St. Paul declares, they are "abominable, and disobedient" to God, walking contrary to His instructions. This is surely an abominable thing to do--after

knowing the Lord to go in an opposite direction, and set His counsel at naught. Such are "to every good work worthless." They do not accomplish anything good, but the very opposite; yet they find fault with everybody else.

R5746 : page 246

The Apostle is not saying here that such have necessarily become immoral and vile in that they have become delvers into all kinds of sin and vice. We are not to read into his words anything that is not there. But he does say that so far as any good work is concerned they will defile it, injure it. Better would it be that they keep away from the Lord's work entirely. They have allowed the bitter spirit to work in them until everything takes on the color of their own minds. They do not recognize to what an extent they are unjust, unrighteous, in their thoughts, their words, their conduct. They are injurious to every good work.

There are lessons of warning here for all of us, lest we should be led astray by the spirit of the Wicked One and become mere fault-finders, accusers of the brethren --not giving our time, our hands, our feet, our tongues, to doing good, to blessing and upbuilding the brethren, but rather to tearing down. In proportion as any one does this, he is worthless, yea, worse than worthless, to the Lord and to His Cause.

NECESSITY FOR GUARDING THE HEART

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," exhorts the Wise Man. The thought embodied in this exhortation is of the utmost importance. Truly these are words of wisdom! As the heart is perhaps the most important organ of the human body, so the word "heart" is here used in a figurative way to represent the center of the affections of the human mind. The implication is that the heart needs keeping. There are many things to distract, to draw away, to lead astray. Not only the burden of business, but also the trend of the world in general and of our fallen flesh, tend to lead the heart away from righteousness, from the service of God, from purity, love and kindness toward others.

The great Adversary also gives his assistance in attempts to thus mislead. The heart--the will, the affections --of every human being should be loyal to God and to righteousness. It was made so originally. As the magnetic needle turns to the pole, so the human

R5747 : page 246

heart should turn to the Lord. Anything to the contrary represents a sinful, distorted, perverted condition. But as a matter of fact, sin has become firmly implanted in the fallen human nature. During these long centuries

of sin many people have striven to keep their hearts right with God. But after getting right, the majority fail to abide in that condition, to keep their heart in God's love, to keep it from going into wrong avenues, from getting into the wrong condition.

We often have difficulty in managing our bodies. There are appetites of the flesh that need constant watching. The tongue needs continual guarding. While we are to watch all these things carefully, yet the most important thing to watch is the heart; for all our evil tendencies have their mainspring there. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things." We should be ever alert to see that our heart is kept pure, true. If we find impurities there, they should be prayerfully fought against and made right. We should keep our minds filled with that which is pure, worthy, Godlike.

As children of God we have learned that the only way to have our hearts right with our Father is through the Lord Jesus Christ. We have come to God through Christ and thus become His sons, receiving His Holy Spirit. Then we have a new influence, a new fountain, opened in the heart, which changes its current, which sweetens its outflow. Thenceforth we love righteousness and hate iniquity. If there is any variation from this at any time, we should see that we are promptly brought back into alignment with the Spirit of the Lord. We need to keep our heart continually under inspection, so that we may abide in close fellowship with the Father and with our Lord Jesus.

"For out of it [the heart] are the issues of life," declared Solomon. From this organ--the heart--the blood is pumped out to all parts of the body. The body is thus dependent upon the heart for its strength, its vitality, its very life. The body would be dead if the heart did not continually propel the blood through the system. So the issues of our bodily life are going forth from the heart every day, yea, every moment. It is either issuing little life or much life each day. So it is with the seat of our affections--so it is with our will. All who come in contact with us day by day are influenced for good or for evil by the spirit we manifest. It is highly important that all our conduct in life should be under the proper direction of a pure heart--one that is carefully watched and kept under inspection, so that today as we go forth, a good issue shall flow out from our heart to others. Thus the Lord will be pleased with us, and will count us "dear children." Thus shall our minds and consciences be kept undefiled.

THE FINAL ISSUE--LIFE OR DEATH

But there is a further sense, a vital sense, in which the issues of life are from the heart. God has informed us that though He sentenced our race to death, He has

made provision for a future and an eternal life for all. And the conditions on which any may have this eternal life are set forth in the Scriptures. They tell us of certain things that must be done. To us who are called and accepted now it is important that we do all we are able to do, because by nature we have sin entrenched in our flesh. Like all of Adam's race, we are imperfect by nature through his fall; but the Lord informs us that if we become His children He will judge us by the heart--by our will, our intention, our desire, our efforts. Therefore when we are thinking of the glorious prize, we are to remember that the ultimate issue of this matter, the final decision, will depend altogether upon how we have fulfilled the conditions. It is as in a court, where a jury is sworn in to decide what the verdict shall be--whether in favor of one party or the other party. There will be an issue in our case, a decision, from which there will be no appeal.

The world will be on trial in the next Age, but the Church of Christ is on trial now--from the time they are begotten of the Holy Spirit. The new life is on trial. Our new heart is before the bar of Divine judgment. That new heart, then, needs keeping very carefully, since connected with it are the issues of eternal life or eternal death. Our hopes are not dependent on a perfect body; some may have a sick body, some may have a naturally amiable disposition, and others not. But our old bodies are reckoned dead from the moment we become New Creatures, and the New Creature is responsible for the control of the body to the best of its ability. These new hearts are to be kept loyal to God, to the principles of righteousness, truth, equity--loyal to our Covenant. If we fail properly to cultivate Christlike character, if we fail to keep in attunement with the Lord, then we shall never develop as New Creatures in Christ. And when the decisive testings come, we shall be found wanting.

The Lord has promised to give the blessing of glory, honor, immortality, joint-heirship with Jesus, to those

R5747 : page 247

who during the Gospel Age attain His character-likeness. And that character-likeness to God will demonstrate our loyalty to the principles of righteousness and to the Divine will. In the case of our Lord Jesus, He was willing, glad, to sacrifice everything to do the Father's will. So must it be with all who would be counted in with Christ. The issues, the results, of our life are here. God says to us, as followers of Christ, as His professed disciples, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Choose life that ye may live." Life is the blessing; death is the curse. All through the Bible this thought is maintained--that the gift of God is His blessing of eternal life, and that "the wages of sin" is the curse of death--not torment.

So to the Christian the issue of our life here on earth is life eternal, if we are faithful. Failing to gain the life eternal, we shall go into death--the Second Death; for if we are disloyal to the principles of righteousness and to the opportunities granted us in this trial for everlasting life that has come to us in the Gospel Age, there remains no future opportunity for us. These words apply to those who have really become children of God, who have tasted of the "heavenly gift." How important, then, to keep our hearts true, loyal, undefiled!

FINAL ISSUE OF LIFE DIFFERING IN DEGREE

Amongst those in whose cases the issue will be everlasting life, there will be different ranks, as regards the degree of honor and blessing. As the Apostle pictures it, "For star differeth from star in glory; so also is the resurrection of the dead"--so it will be with those who have a part in the First Resurrection. Some will have a brighter glory in the Kingdom than others. We might say that there will be various issues--greater honor and less honor. As elsewhere shown in the Scriptures, there are two classes who will gain everlasting life on the spiritual plane of being. Many will be of the Great Company; some will be of the Little Flock, the Bride of Christ. Some will attain the highest plane, immortality; but more will get life similar to that of the angels, on a lower spirit plane.

So we see the wisdom of the Scriptural exhortation that the heart needs constant attention, because there are such important, vital issues in respect to it. And we see the wisdom in warning of the danger of permitting the mind and the conscience to become defiled and impure. Some might say, "I will be very careful about every word I speak." Very well so far. But to keep the tongue would not alone be sufficient to give eternal life; for the heart might be quite different from the tongue in some cases. One might be able to speak very smoothly, yet have a deceitful, impure heart. Again, one might say, "I will watch my body, and not sin with it." But that would not be enough. We must get down to the source. The Lord is looking at the desires, the intentions of the heart, in His people. This needs special watching, because the heart is the battle-ground, so great are the issues from it--life or death. If life, then we desire that we may have the highest place that God is willing to grant us. And it is ours by meeting the conditions.

=====

R5747 : page 247

JEHOVAH OUR GOD IS ONE

"To us there is but one God, the Father, of

whom are all things."--1 Corinthians 8:6.

NOTWITHSTANDING the wide-spread acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity, we have held closely to the Bible teaching that there is but one God. Jesus called God His Father, and spoke of Himself as the Son of God. A father is a life-giver. A son is an offspring, one who receives life from a father. This distinction implies that the father existed first. And so Jesus says of Himself, "I proceeded forth and came from God."--John 8:42.

In our writings we show the clear teachings of the Bible, that Jesus in His pre-human condition was the Logos, the Word, or Message, from the Father; and that as such He was called a god, but not the God--the Father. On so important a question as the equality of the Father and the Son, we must not rely upon any man's testimony except that of the inspired writers of the Scriptures. We should accept no dictum save that of the Divine Word itself. Let us ask Jesus. He replies, "My Father is greater than I"; "I can of Mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge"; "My Father is greater than all"; "I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God"; "This is life eternal, that they

R5748 : page 247

might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."--John 14:28; 5:30; 10:29; 17:3; 20:17.

In our writings we point out that Jesus was the first of God's creatures, the only being directly created by Jehovah; and that Jehovah did all subsequent creating through the Son. Thus we read that Jesus was "the beginning of the creation of God," "the First-born of every creature," "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" of the Father's direct creation. (Revelation 3:14; 22:13; Colossians 1:15.) The Apostle John declares (John 1:1-3), "In the beginning [not Jehovah's beginning, for He had no beginning; but the world's beginning, or man's beginning] was the Word [the Logos], and the Word was with the God and the Word was a god. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." Could this subject be made plainer? Why confuse ourselves needlessly? Why fight against the plain statements of God's Word to uphold a theory which is without Bible support and was formulated in the Dark Ages?

We teach, as does the Bible, that the Lord Jesus came from Heaven to earth; was born of a virgin mother; that He, "the Logos, was made flesh and dwelt among us," and His disciples "beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth!" (John 1:14.) Jesus had not two natures, but one nature,

having changed the higher, the spiritual nature, for the human nature. As the Scriptures declare, "He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich." (2 Corinthians 8:9.) And as He grew to manhood He grew in favor with God and man. He was perfect--"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."--Luke 2:52; Hebrews 7:26.

JESUS BECAME A NEW CREATURE

At thirty years of age, this Perfect One, having reached the perfection of manhood according to the Law consecrated, or devoted, His life to God as the great Sacrifice for human sin, fulfilling the Scriptures, "a body hast Thou prepared Me," "for the suffering of death." (Hebrews 10:5; 2:9.) That consecrated sacrifice of the Man Jesus God accepted, indicating His acceptance by the anointing of Jesus with the Holy Spirit at Jordan. Thenceforth He was dual--a perfect human body with

R5748 : page 248

a newly begotten mind--spirit-begotten. He then, as a New Creature, was to complete the sacrifice of His flesh; and His new mind--the New Creature--was to go on to perfection. He prayed that the Father would restore Him to the glory which He had with the Father "before the world was." (John 17:5.) In His humility He asked no higher glory. His sacrifice was finished at Calvary, and His new mind, His spirit-begotten new nature was, in the resurrection, granted the new body which the Father had promised. "Sown in dishonor," He was "raised in glory"; "sown in weakness," He was "raised in power"; "sown a natural body," He was "raised a spiritual body."--1 Corinthians 15:43,44.

Our Lord was not originally created in the way the angels were; for He was the direct creation of the Father, whereas the angels were the indirect creations of God, through the Son. St. Paul declares that all things are of the Father, and all things are through, by the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6.) He was the Father's honored agent in all other works of creation.

Our Lord Jesus became the Christ, the Anointed, when He received the anointing of the Holy Spirit at His baptism. He was perfected as the Christ at His resurrection. He was a god (Mighty One) before He came into the world; He also was a god from the time He received the begetting of the Holy Spirit at Jordan; and He is still a god, set down at the right hand of the Father. But He is not The God, He never was and never will be. Note again His own words after His resurrection, when speaking to Mary Magdalene: "I ascend to My Father and your Father; to My God and your God." (John 20:17.) Hear what St. Paul says, "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, * * * and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by [or through] whom are all

things." (1 Corinthians 8:6.) Again, in referring to Jehovah, the Apostle calls Him, "God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"; and again, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ."--2 Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 1:3,17.

A COMMON, BUT UNSCRIPTURAL VIEW

The Lord Jesus is not the second person of a triune God. The word "triune" is unscriptural; so is the thought. St. Paul sets the matter straight in his words quoted above. He also declares that Jesus "thought not of robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation." No translation of this passage (Philippians 2:6), save in our Common Version gives the thought that Jesus considered Himself equal to God the Father, but all are to the contrary of this. Our Common Version rendering is evidently a mistranslation. The entire argument of the Apostle shows that Christ humiliated Himself, not that He claimed equality with Jehovah!

The word "trinity" is not found in the Bible. The only text in the Bible which seems in any way to suggest a trinity is acknowledged even by trinitarians themselves to be a forgery, incorporated into the text about the fifth century. This interpolation forms a part of 1 John 5:7,8. We quote the passage, with the interpolated words enclosed in brackets: "For there are three that bear record [in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness in earth,] the Spirit and the water and the blood: and these three agree in one." See Revised Version, Emphatic Diaglott, American Standard Union translation, Young's translation, etc. This passage is pronounced an interpolation by such eminent authorities as Sir Isaac Newton, Benson, Adam Clarke, Horne, Griesbach, Tischendorf and Alford.

We have explained in our writings that there was a time when our Lord Jesus did not exist, when Jehovah was alone. How else could the Bible declare that Jesus was the "beginning of the creation of God"? (Rev. 3:14.) What is the value of language, anyway, if we do not give words their manifest meaning? Jesus undoubtedly had a beginning. This beginning was ages before He came to earth as a human being to die for Adam and his race. Those who denounce us should read our writings before criticizing them. Then they would not criticize at all, if honest; for they would know that there is no ground for criticism on the part of those who hold to the Bible as the Word of God.

THE LOGOS TRANSFERRED FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH

The Lord Jesus had a Heavenly nature before He came into the world. He exchanged that nature, as we have stated, for an earthly one, in order that He might give His flesh, His humanity, a Ransom-price for the

sins of the whole world. Having accomplished this great work, He was granted by the Father an exaltation still higher than His previous glorious position and nature, even though His previous station had been second only to Jehovah Himself. St. Paul declares of the position given Christ at His resurrection: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth [those now in the tomb, but yet to be raised to learn the Truth as it is in Jesus]; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."--Philippians 2:9-11.

When on earth Jesus was not a sinful man in any sense. His birth of the Virgin Mary was miraculous. His holy life was transferred to human conditions. He was made a man--"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," and fit, therefore, to be the great Sin offering for Adam and all his posterity. He was simply the Man Jesus up to the time of His immersion in Jordan; but the anointing He there received constituted Him the Anointed of God, the Christ, the Messiah.

MADE "PARTAKER OF THE DIVINE NATURE"

Jesus was a god, a Mighty One, higher than the angels, before He became a man. When born a babe, He was not a god at all, but a human being; and as the perfect man of thirty He was not a god. But when He received the anointing of the Holy Spirit, of Divine power, He became a Mighty One, because of this spirit-begetting. And since His resurrection He is a god, greater than ever before, "partaker of the Divine nature"; for His Church are called to this great exaltation, and they are called to the obtaining of the glory of their Lord, that they may be with Him, as His Bride, and be like Him, members of His glorious Body.--2 Thessalonians 2:14; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 21:2,9; 22:17; 1 Corinthians 10:16,17; 12:12,13,27; 2 Peter 1:4.

Our Lord is the great Head of His Church, and Head and Body must partake of the same nature in glory. He gave up His human nature in death to purchase the human race. For parts of three days He lay dead in the tomb--not alive in any sense; for death is the absence of life. He had given up His human life never to take it up again. It was the purchase-price for the world. He was resurrected to the Divine plane, an exaltation never before given to any creature of God. His Bride is called to the same glorious nature as her Head, whose inheritance she is invited to share. Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of God.--Romans 6:4; 8:11; Acts 2:22,24,32,33.

Notice for a moment the great confusion from which we are saved by following the Bible's own testimony respecting our Lord Jesus and by throwing out the ridiculous nonsense of the Dark Ages. We are saved from thinking of our God as three beings with only one body or one being with three bodies. Trinitarians do not know which of these creedal statements to take--some say one and some say the other. But both are wholly irrational: three are not one and one is not three. The oneness between the Father and the Son is explained by our Lord Himself. He prayed that His disciples might become one in the same sense that He and the Father were one--surely not that His disciples might become one person, but that they might be one in spirit, in mind, in purpose, as were the Father and Himself. See John 17:20-23. The followers of Jesus become one in mind and purpose by each giving up his own will to do God's will. And Jesus and the Father are one because Jesus surrendered His will to the Father's will, saying, "Not My will, but Thine be done"; "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me"; "Lo, I come; I delight to do Thy will, O My God!" These are the words of the Lord Jesus to the Father.

Touching the rise of the Trinitarian view, Abbott and Conant's Religious Dictionary, page 944, says, "It was not until the beginning of the fourth century that the Trinitarian view began to be elaborated and formulated into a doctrine and an endeavor made to reconcile it with the belief of the Church in ONE GOD." "Out of the attempt to solve this problem sprang the doctrine of the Trinity." Trinity "is a very marked feature in Hindooism, and is discernible in Persian, Egyptian, Roman, Japanese and the most ancient Grecian mythologies."

Like some other doctrines received by Protestants from Papacy, this one is accepted and fully endorsed, although its educated adherents are aware that not a text of Scripture can be adduced to its support. Yea, more; whoever will not affirm this unscriptural doctrine as his faith is declared by the articles of the Evangelical Alliance to be non-orthodox--a heretic. Hebrews 1:8 has been used by Trinitarians as a proof text that Jesus is Jehovah, and the fact is cited that the word God here is theos, the same as verse 9 which refers to the Father. They seem not to have noticed that the word god, 2 Corinthians 4:4, which refers to Satan, is also theos in the Greek. Theos is used of any mighty one, the same as Elohim in the Hebrew.

Philippians 2:8,9 implies that our Lord's present glory is greater than the glory which He possessed before He became a man; otherwise it could not have been an exaltation. Now having the Divine, immortal nature He cannot die. "Christ dieth no more." How straightforward and simple and reasonable is the Scriptural presentation compared with human traditions! In what a jumble of contradictions and confusion do they find

themselves who say that Jesus and the Father are one God! This would involve the idea that our Lord Jesus acted the hypocrite when on earth and only pretended to address God in prayer, when He Himself was the same God. Such should conclude, too, that since we read that God cannot be tempted of any, it was only a farce when Jesus was tempted of Satan. Again, the Father has always been immortal, hence could not die. How then, could Jesus have died? The Apostles are all false witnesses in declaring Jesus' death and resurrection if He did not die. The Scriptures declare, however, that He did die--"He poured out His soul [His being] unto death," not merely His body, as many assert.--Isaiah 53:12.

If they admit that Jesus really died, they take the other horn of the dilemma; for believing that their three Gods are all one person as many do, when Jesus died they must all three have died. If they all died, who raised them to life? How foolish all this sounds! Yet if Jesus and the Father are the same person, the same Being, then when Jesus died the Father must have died. Shall we thus contradict the Apostles and Prophets and Jesus Himself, and ignore reason and common sense, in order to hold to a dogma handed to us from the dark, superstitious past, by a corrupt apostate Church? Nay! "To the Law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURES RE THE HOLY SPIRIT

We next inquire, What say the Scriptures with regard to the Holy Spirit? The nominal churches, Protestant and Catholic, affirm that the Holy Spirit is a person, the third person of the Trinity. They claim that all this is "a great mystery." Yes, truly it is a mystery, such as is characteristic of the confusion of man-made creeds held by Babylon. But to those who turn to the Word of God and let it speak, all is clear and plain. We suggest that whatever definition of the term "Holy Spirit" will meet all known conditions and harmonize all Scriptures bearing thereon may be understood to be the true meaning of the term. We will first give what we conceive to be such a definition, and then ask the reader to subject every Scripture where this term is used to this definition and see if it does not make harmony of all.

We understand the Bible to teach that the Holy Spirit is the Divine will, influence, power or disposition, exercised anywhere and for any purpose, at the Divine pleasure. God exercises His Spirit or energy in a variety of ways, using various agencies, and accomplishing various results. Whatever God does through agencies is as truly His work as though He were the direct actor, since all His agencies are His creation--created by His own Power; just as a contractor for building is said to build a house, though he may never have lifted a tool upon it. He does it with his materials and through his agents. Thus, when we read that Jehovah God created the heavens

and the earth, we are not to suppose that He personally handled them. He used an Agent. "He spake and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast." His holy Power was exercised through His Only Begotten. God's Spirit was exercised in times past through the Prophets. "They spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" [Power] of God. The masculine pronoun is often used in our Common Version Bible in referring to the Holy Spirit of God, because God, who is a Spirit, is represented as masculine, as indicative of strength. The pronoun translated he when referring to the Holy Spirit can with equal consistency be translated it, and is often so rendered. See Diaglott rendering of John 14:17,26, as an example. For further elucidation of this subject of the Holy Spirit, we refer the interested reader to our Fifth Volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Chapters 8-11, where we have treated the subject at length.

"One reads with father's specs upon his head,
And sees the thing just as his father did;
Another reads through Campbell or through Scott,
And thinks it means exactly what they thought.
Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,
Thus understand but little what they read;
And every passage in the Book they bend
To make it suit that all-important end.
Some people read, as I have often thought,
To teach the Book, instead of to be taught."

=====

R5749 : page 250

MAKING FRIENDS OF THE UNRIGHTEOUS MAMMON

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."--Luke 16:9.

GOD'S chosen heritage was the Jewish people. Under the Mosaic Covenant there were certain members of that nation who were representatives of God and of the people Israel. Therefore Jesus could say to His disciples, "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Whatsoever, therefore, they bid you do, that observe and do; but do not after their works; for they say and do not." (Matthew 23:2,3.) God had committed to them these special responsibilities, blessings, privileges and knowledge, and the people were more or less dependent upon them; and they were unjust in their dealings with the people.

Through His Son, the Lord sent word to these Scribes

and Pharisees that they were to be cast out of the stewardship. They had come to understand in a general way that a New Dispensation was coming in--the Gospel Age. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, had also proclaimed that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. Now Jesus gives a parable, which explains the reason for the course which these classes should take. He assumes the case of an unjust steward who was called upon by his lord to render up his accounts, because his stewardship was about to end.

When notified that his dismissal was at hand, this steward tried to make friends of all who were debtors to his master. No matter how unjust the steward had been with these debtors before, he now minimized their accounts, as he had a right to do. In olden times a steward had the right to make contracts, etc., for his master. So this steward cut down the accounts and made friends of the people. Commenting upon his course, our Lord said that this was a very wise procedure on the part of the steward, for thus he would be ingratiated into the favor of those who could help him. While our Lord commended this course as good worldly wisdom, He did not commend the steward's injustice, but his shrewdness in adopting a policy which would win the favor and friendship of those whom he had unjustly treated before.

Applied to His time, our Master's words would teach that the Scribes and Pharisees should have sought to win the love and gratitude of their Jewish brethren. Had they tried to make the people happy and contented, it might have gone better with them afterward. But they did not do this; and when the great time of trouble came upon the nation, in the year 70 A.D., these religious rulers

R5750 : page 250

were among the chief mourners and sufferers in the trouble. They had not been as wise as the unjust steward.

OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AS GOD'S STEWARDS

Then our Lord applied the parable to His disciples, and gave them a lesson. "Likewise I say the same unto you." The application of the parable to His followers is somewhat different from its application to the Scribes and Pharisees. "I say unto you: Make for yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." In other words, the Lord's people are here advised to use whatever of the unrighteous mammon they may have in doing as much good as possible, in blessing and assisting others; and thus they will make grateful, appreciative friends.

This does not mean that our good deeds and our use of whatever means the Lord has given us should be with a view to bringing commendation and material advantage to ourselves, but with a view to being of real service in blessing others along the lines laid down in the Scriptures. Thus the Lord's children make themselves truly worthy

and pleasing to God. We believe this is a good plan to follow now. The Master declared that the children of this world are generally wiser than the children of light in recognizing what is for their best interests.

TIME OF TROUBLE PICTURED IN FRENCH REVOLUTION

The ecclesiastical powers of today are professedly sitting in the seat of Christ. The masses of the people know nothing better than what their religious rulers tell them. Now that these Doctors of the Law see the present Dispensation coming to an end, they should seek to correct their former mistakes in dealing with their flocks, should seek to make some reparation for all their past delinquencies. They have been to a greater or less extent hiding "the key of knowledge" (Luke 11:52), to a greater or less extent imposing on the superstitions of the people, and taking the people's money under false pretenses. They should now seek to rectify all this so far as possible by telling the people the truth. They should try to save themselves from the violence of the fall which is coming to them. Were they to do so they would not fall so hard when the great disaster comes. But in antagonizing the interests of the people more and more they are adding to their own distress in the near future, as the Scriptures point out.

We should not be surprised if the priests and ministers will suffer more distress in the great trouble time nearing than will the people, because of their having hoodwinked the people. The Catholic priests suffered terribly at the time of the French Revolution, which was a picture on a small scale of the approaching great cataclysm. The French Revolution, we understand, is clearly referred to in Revelation 12:15,16. See also *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, Vol. 3, pp. 50-54, and pp. 64-69. We believe that the nominal church clergy and leaders will particularly suffer in the universal overthrow of the Present Order near at hand--some of them because they have actively opposed the Truth; some because of posing as representatives of truth and enlightenment and the liberties of the people, and failing really to stand for the truth which they recognized--keeping quiet about it for policy's sake. They have failed to conserve the interests which they pretended to serve.

APPLICATION OF PARABLE TO THE SAINTS

In applying the words of Jesus to ourselves, they would seem to teach that to whatever extent we have the mammon of unrighteousness, worldly goods, we should be inclined to be liberal rather than penurious, according to the measure of our ability. We take it that the Lord is showing us here that we as His followers have more or less of means, opportunity, influence, etc., and that we should use these talents He has given us in forwarding His Cause. And if in our presentations of Truth a certain

amount of denunciation may be met with, we should rather let the matter go unnoticed and seek to be generous, so far as is compatible with faithfulness to the Lord and the spirit of His Word.

The Master adds, "that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Those who could receive us into everlasting habitations would be only the Lord and His angels. He has promised to receive all His faithful ones. Our use of the unrighteous mammon, our sacrificing of earthly interests, which might in some cases bring us blessings from men, would surely at last bring us the crowning blessing from the Lord, as is promised. Our failing will be the reaching of the end of our sacrificial course. All of the Lord's people are to die--that is the purport of their consecration; it is a sacrifice even unto death. If they are of this class who make friends

R5750 : page 251

with, or of, or through. the mammon of unrighteousness, if they sacrifice these earthly things, then when they fail, when they die, when they have finished their course, they will be received into everlasting habitations--the place prepared for the faithful class of "more than conquerors," the "House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens."

We would not apply the word "they" necessarily to those of whom we made friends. God is our Friend, if we as His children live a life of self-sacrifice and ignore the selfish use of earthly mammon in favor of the service of the Lord. Then our friends, those who will receive us when we fail, will be not those alone or those necessarily who may have been benefited by our sacrifices, but will be especially those beyond the veil--the Father, the Lord Jesus, the glorified saints, and all the holy angels. Blessed expectation!

=====

R5750 : page 251

TRESPASSES AND SINS AND THEIR EFFECT ON CHARACTER

"All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."--1 John 5:17.

WE SHOULD recognize a distinction between trespasses and sins. A sin is that which is more or less wilfully and intentionally committed. A trespass is a sin in a certain sense, but one committed without intention. The fact that a sin is called a trespass would imply that it was not done wilfully. The Divine Law stands whether we are able to keep it or not; and every violation of the Divine Law is a sin in one sense. But those violations of God's Law which are

wholly the result of our unavoidable weaknesses are not culpable sins, and hence not in the same category with sins more or less wilful.

So far as the world is concerned, it is already under condemnation for sin. Those who have accepted Christ and have received the forgiveness of their sins through Him, are spoken of by the Apostle Paul as those whose sins "are past, through the forbearance of God." (Romans 3:25.) Because of their consecration of their lives to be the followers of Christ these sins are forever gone, so far as responsibility for their transgressions is concerned. From this time on the Lord's people are counted no more as sinners, but as saints whose whole lives have been devoted to righteousness.

Nevertheless, we have this treasure of the New Creature in earthen vessels, our mortal bodies. The New Creature in Christ does not expect to practise sin any more; for if he should sin wilfully, this would mean his entire repudiation of the Covenant into which he has entered with the Lord. But notwithstanding this, he will commit trespasses; for he has merely the good intentions of the heart, with only an imperfect body in which to operate. The Apostles recognized this fact. St. Paul declared that in his flesh dwelt no perfection. St. John says that whosoever says that he has no sin deceives himself, and the Truth is not in him. (1 John 1:8-10.) This same Apostle, in the same Epistle, declares that whoever sins is of the Devil. In this last text he evidently refers to the practise of sin, to wilful sin, not to unavoidable trespasses; for he has just said that all commit these unintentional violations of God's Law. St. James says that in many things we all offend. (James 3:2.) To will is present with every consecrated child of God; but how to perform is the problem.

OUR ATTITUDE BECAUSE OF TRESPASSES

According to the Scriptures it is sinful for the Lord's people to injure one another in word, act or thought. But many do not realize this high standard, even after they have come into the family of God. They may not learn until months, or even years afterward, the full measure of the Divine Law respecting every affair in life. Therefore there are many who for a time are guilty of evil-speaking and evil-thinking, but who are unconscious of having done wrong. These transgressions of the Divine Law are trespasses. This should be our attitude toward God: "Gracious Heavenly Father, we cannot do perfectly. We pray Thee, forgive our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. We come with courage to Thy Throne of Heavenly Grace, asking for the covering of the merit of our Savior for these trespasses, and for grace to overcome as far as possible and to become holy in thought, in word, in deed."

But if any man sin, it is a different matter. In proportion as he wilfully violates the Divine Law, in that

proportion he shall suffer stripes. Sins leave their mark on the character; for they are to some extent at least intentional violations of the principles of righteousness and of the Covenant with God by which every real Christian obligates himself to obey the Divine injunction. The Scriptures clearly indicate that if one of these deliberately sins, he commits the sin unto death, for which no penalty will be sufficient except the extinction of the Second Death.

R5751 : page 251

TRESPASSES NOT NECESSARILY A HINDRANCE

The text, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous," evidently refers to trespasses and not to deliberate, or wilful sins; for, as we have already noted, the same Apostle writes, "He that sinneth is of the Devil"; "that which is begotten of God sinneth not." Any one begotten of God, possessed of the Holy Spirit, could not, so long as he is in possession of this Holy Spirit, commit a sin with full intention. Except under the influence of strong temptation of the flesh, he could not sin knowingly; for if he were to commit such a sin, he would be manifesting that he had lost the Holy Spirit entirely. So long as the Holy Spirit abides in him he could not wilfully, intelligently, commit sin. He might be overcome by the weaknesses of the flesh, and thus might give a measure of consent to the wrong; but this would be only a partial sin. Yet for that portion which would involve the consent of his mind he would receive stripes, in proportion to the degree of wilfulness connected with the matter.

Our unintentional trespasses, properly striven against, evidently do not interfere with the development of character. The implication of the Scriptures is that the New Creature who is properly growing is striving against all kinds of sin and imperfection and is waging a good warfare. In the case of trespasses which are unavoidable on his part, instead of doing him an injury, these serve to show him what points in his character are weak and need to be strengthened. He learns of his weaknesses only by more or less falling into trespasses unintentionally, unwillingly. As he finds weaknesses in his character-development, it becomes his pleasure and earnest effort to fortify himself along these lines, that he may become "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."--Ephesians 6:10.

THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

Our Lord declared that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men except the blasphemy

R5751 : page 252

against the Holy Spirit. His thought here, we believe, is that because men are more or less imperfect in their judgment, on that account the Lord would be willing to forgive all such blemishes and trespasses; for they are unintentional. Hence there would be Divine forgiveness for some of the great trespasses and transgressions which they have committed. The crucifixion of our Lord was not really intentional. Speaking of those who crucified Christ the Apostle Peter says, "I wot, brethren, that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." St. Paul expresses the same thought, saying, "For had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory."--Acts 3:17; 1 Corinthians 2:8.

These statements imply that this act was more or less of a trespass on the part of the perpetrators. There was a measure of sin, a measure of knowledge. In proportion as they had knowledge they had responsibility, and proportionately received stripes, nationally and individually. Therefore the Scriptures tell us that there will be future opportunities of blessing to those who crucified the Prince of Life. Their eyes will be opened when they awake. We are glad of this. They did not sin with full knowledge and wilfulness, and are not, therefore, subjects of the Second Death. They will have a future trial. But we understand they will come up merely as members of the race of Adam. They will have no special favor as Jews, and may require, indeed, many stripes. Some may never be recovered.

What is it to sin against the Holy Spirit? We reply that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Truth, of righteousness. Whoever recognizes the Spirit of the Truth, the Lord's Spirit, and intentionally does violence to it and to the messengers of that Truth, because they are its messengers, is sinning against the Holy Spirit; and to whatever extent one does this he is a wilful sinner. If his act be committed with full knowledge, full light, there would never be forgiveness for the sin, either in this life or in the life to come. And the end of that sin against full light and understanding would be the Second Death. While every intentional sin against the Holy Spirit, against the Truth, must have a punishment, whether in this Age or in the incoming Age, yet the punishment will not be the Second Death unless the knowledge, the sin, be a full, complete one.

=====

R5751 : page 252

ELIJAH'S RETURN AND VICTORY

--SEPTEMBER 5.--1 KINGS 18:16-40.--

ELIJAH'S EXPERIENCES TYPICAL--KING AHAB AND QUEEN
JEZEBEL ALSO TYPES--THREE AND A HALF YEARS' DROUGHT
PREFIGURED TWELVE HUNDRED AND SIXTY YEARS OF

SPIRITUAL DROUGHT--ELIJAH'S PRAYER OF FAITH BROUGHT
NATURAL SHOWERS--CHURCH'S PRAYERS OF FAITH
BROUGHT SPIRITUAL SHOWERS AND A GREAT REFORMATION.

OUR lesson is interesting as we find it simply recorded in the Bible, but the interest of Bible students increases from the time they learn that Elijah was not only a Prophet of the Lord, but also a type of the Church's earthly experiences. The Book of Revelation (2:20-25; 18:7) pictures to us Queen Jezebel as representing a great religious system of this Gospel Age which did great violence to the Truth. Ahab represented the worldly governments. His wife represented a false Christian Church system married to earthly governments. As Ahab represented the worldly governments claiming to be Christ's kingdoms, so Queen Jezebel pictured, or typified, a false Church system, which, instead of maintaining its purity as the virgin Church of Christ, became married or united to these earthly systems. Contrary to this, the true virgin Church of Christ was to remain faithful to her Heavenly Lord, awaiting His Second Coming; and her marriage to Him was then to be accomplished.

As the Prophets of Baal were under the care of Queen Jezebel and under the patronage of King Ahab, so the priests and the religious representatives of a great church system have been the obedient servants of the great false institutions pictured by Ahab and Jezebel. Similarly, Elijah the Prophet and his dealings with Ahab, Jezebel and the affairs of Israel, was a type of the true Church of Christ in the flesh--this side the veil. Although the true Church is indeed represented symbolically by a woman, it is also represented sometimes by a man, when the picture includes the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church.

In Revelation we have the three and a half years of Elijah's experience stated in symbolic language--forty-two months--1,260 days--three and a half times or years. (Revelation 11:2,3; 12:6,14; 13:5.) In Revelation the time was symbolic, so that each day of the three and a half years represented a year, or the whole period 1,260 years. Some Bible scholars have applied this period as beginning in 539 A.D. and ending in 1798 A.D., at the time when Napoleon Bonaparte took the Pope of Rome prisoner to Paris.

As during Elijah's hiding in the wilderness there was no rain until he came forth, as told in today's lesson, so in the Church's experiences there was a lack of rain, a drouth spiritually, for twelve hundred and sixty years, ending in 1798.

As just before the time of drought in Israel ended, there was a great contest (related in to-day's lesson), with the victory on the side of the Lord, so in the history of the Church a great contest took place between Catholicism

and Protestantism in the period styled the Reformation. In the Revelation picture the Church, symbolized by a woman, is seen driven into the wilderness--lost to the general view. The woman corresponds in the type to Elijah hidden from view to the king, the queen and the prophets of Baal--in the world, but not of it. As Elijah was fed in the wilderness by the ravens, so the account in Revelation says that the woman, the true Church, secluded from general view, was, nevertheless, spiritually fed during the twelve hundred and sixty years in which the famine for spiritual food prevailed in the world.

The Elijah class did a very courageous work after emerging from the wilderness condition. Spiritual refreshment came in abundant measure. For a time it looked as though Queen Jezebel had been vanquished, and that the slaying of her prophets with the Sword of Truth had demonstrated their errors and put the Truth of God and its servant, Elijah, the true Church, into a commanding position. However, this was not for long. Our next lesson will show us the Elijah class again fleeing from Jezebel's power.

WHY DEPRIVED OF RAIN

Many express surprise that in response to earnest Bible study the Word of God in our day is telling such a beautiful Message of Divine Wisdom, Justice, Love

R5751 : page 253

and Power--a Message very contrary to the teachings of the past. "How," they ask, "is it possible for Bible students of today to have so much more light on God's Word than was found by equally zealous Bible students of the past?"

We reply that the twelve hundred and sixty years of spiritual drought are the explanation. About the year 300 A.D., Christian bishops began to claim Apostolic powers and to style themselves Apostolic Bishops. The claim is still made that the bishops of the Church of Rome, of the Church of England, etc., are of equal authority with the twelve Apostles, while the Bible claims to the contrary --that the twelve Apostles selected by Jesus (St. Paul taking the place of Judas) were to be the only foundations of the Christian Church, their teachings being on a full parallel with those of the Lord Jesus--they being His special mouthpieces to the Church, orally and through their epistles. Jesus prophesied the falling away which would result in some falsely claiming to be

R5752 : page 253

Apostles. See Rev. 2:2. Compare 2 Pet. 2:1; Acts 20:30.

This exaltation of the bishops came in gradually and was given great force by the action of Emperor Constantine

in calling for a Church Council at Nice, Bithynia, 325 A.D. The Council, under the Emperor's guidance, produced the Nicene Creed as representing the faith of the people of God. Subsequently that creed was impressed upon the people as being the only proper and infallible faith. Similarly, other additions to the creed were made later on by the bishops. The indorsement of these creeds implied that the bishops who made them had the right, the authority, the Divine revelation necessary for the work; and the people gradually endorsing the creeds were really endorsing at the same time the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, which was subsequently made a feature of the creeds.

From the time the Nicene Creed was promulgated and accepted, 325 A.D., there was practically no more Bible study for over twelve centuries. During all that time Bible study was considered unnecessary, because the Apostolic Bishops had formulated the creeds as proper statements of the Church's faith. To study the Bible would have meant the studying of how to fight against the Emperor and the combined views and teachings of the bishops. Besides, Bibles, then written on parchment, were worth a fortune and possessed by few; and education necessary for reading was extremely limited.

REVIVAL OF BIBLE STUDY

Twelve hundred years after the first expression by the so-called Apostolic Bishops brings us to 1526, when the art of printing had become common. In that year Prof. Tyndale, having prepared his MS., published it in Germany, because of the opposition of the English clergy. He imported his New Testaments into London, in whose shops the people began to purchase them. Few were able to read; but many were glad to organize classes and to hire a reader, that they might know the Word of God. At this same time the Germans were learning something of the New Testament and its different teachings, from Luther and his associates.

The Church of England bishops had heard about this New Testament. They forthwith bought up the entire edition in the shops, and publicly burnt them in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, London. They feared that the people would become interested in the words of Jesus and the Divinely-inspired Twelve Apostles; and that they, who had taken to themselves the title of "Apostolic Bishop," would become mere ciphers. They knew, too, that the eighteen Ecumenical Councils held during those twelve hundred years had declared to be true Christian faith many things not taught in the Bible, and that they had omitted many things that are taught therein. They feared that the people, becoming Bible students, would know of these things, and thus would be upset the general belief based in the creeds--and not in the Bible.

We see, however, that their fears were almost groundless. The teachings of the creeds, impressed for twelve

centuries, have so fastened themselves upon the minds of the people that they can read to the contrary in the Bible and never notice the discrepancy! However, a great Bible-study inclination came at that time to the British people. Several other translations were subsequently brought out, until finally the bishops considered it advisable to give the Bible to the people, impressing upon them the thought that the bishops had all along been upholding the Bible. Then, too, they warned the people against putting any construction upon the Bible that would make it different from the teaching of the so-called "Apostolic Bishops" in the creeds--threatening them with eternal torment.

Interest in the Bible continuing, King James thought to popularize himself by authorizing a committee to prepare the so-called King James Version. While it was in preparation, the Roman Catholics, not to be outdone, produced a version entitled the Douay Bible--still in vogue. This also was given to the people, with the suggestion that it was in harmony with the creeds, and that any one interpreting it differently would be a heretic who could not be stopped even in Purgatory, but would pass straight on to eternal torture.

As it was, Tyndale and some of the others interested in the Bible suffered martyrdom, as enemies of the "Apostolic Bishops," and their creeds and institutions. The conflict proceeded, as already suggested, until 1799, when the Bible came into great prominence, nearly all of our great Bible Societies of today having been organized within fifteen years after that date. The foretold period of spiritual drought having been ended, a great spiritual shower came to the world. Nevertheless, as our next lesson will show, Ahab, and especially Jezebel, were unchanged. Elijah's life being again in danger, he fled to the wilderness.

PILGRIMS ALL, IN SOLEMN HASTE

"Silent, like men in solemn haste,
Girded wayfarers of the waste,
We pass out at the world's wide gate,
Turning our back on all its state;
We press along the narrow road
That leads to life, to bliss, to God.

"We cannot and we would not stay;
We dread the snares that throng the way;
We fling aside the weight and sin,
Resolved the victory to win;
We know the peril, but our eyes
Rest on the splendor of the prize.

"'Tis but a little and we come
To our reward, our crown, our Home!

Another year, or more, or less,
And we have crossed the wilderness;
Finished the toil, the rest begun,
The battle fought, the triumph won!

"We grudge not, then, the toil, the way;
Its ending is the endless Day!
We shrink not from these tempests keen,
With little of the calm between;
We welcome each descending sun;
Ere morn our joy may be begun!"

=====

R5752 : page 254

ELIJAH'S FLIGHT AND VISION

--SEPTEMBER 12.--1 KINGS 19:8-18.--

JEZEBEL UNREPENTANT--AHAB UPHOLDS HER--ELIJAH'S
LIFE THREATENED--HE FLEES, DISCOURAGED--GOD GRANTED
HIM A VISION OF THE FUTURE--THE WIND, THE
EARTHQUAKE, THE FIRE, THE STILL, SMALL VOICE--WHAT
THESE THINGS SIGNIFY NOW TO THE ANTITYPICAL ELIJAH CLASS.

ELIJAH expected that, after three and a half years of Divine chastisement, followed by a special manifestation of Divine Power against the representatives of Baal, the true God and the true religion would have a measure of prosperity with the people. He was surprised to find Queen Jezebel bitter and murderous as ever and King Ahab fully dominated by her influence. He fled, sadly discouraged. After a long sleep, relieving his nervous strain, the Lord gave him, through an angel, a special message of comfort and food which lasted forty days, until he came to the Mount of God--Horeb.

There Elijah went through a series of experiences (whether literal or in vision we may not be too certain), in which the Lord was to reveal Himself. First came the winds, rending the rocks; but God was not in the winds. Next came the earthquake, with destructive force; but God was not in the earthquake. Then followed the devouring fire, but God was not in the fire. Finally came the still, small Voice, which Luther's translation renders, "The Voice of Eden." God was in the Voice--it really and truly represented Him. This narrative multiplies in its force to Bible students when they realize that all these things which occurred to Elijah foreshadowed experiences with which the Church of Christ in the flesh is intimately connected.

Jezebel still represents a form of godliness great and boastful, and supported by earthly power, represented in King Ahab. The picture intimates to us that the great

social and religious upheaval of a century ago did not deeply affect or greatly alter the outward attitude of the Church nominal and the world toward the true Church of Christ in the flesh, represented typically by the Prophet Elijah. The reformation was partial only. Great institutions still upheld many of the serious errors of the past. The Elijah class again passed out of public view, though not out of communion and fellowship with God, Divine supervision providing for their necessities of rest and spiritual refreshment.

Mount Horeb, otherwise called the "Mount of God," fitly represented in the picture Messiah's Kingdom. The coming of Elijah to it portrayed the fact that the Church will be in and under the Kingdom administration while still in the flesh, although the last members of the Church

R5753 : page 254

will not fully participate in the Kingdom honors and blessings until they shall have experienced the great resurrection "change" noted by St. Paul in the words, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."--1 Corinthians 15:50-52.

WHAT THE ANTITYPICAL ELIJAH SEES

Many Bible students understand that chronologically Messiah's Kingdom began its operation in the world in the year 1878, while the last members of the Elijah class are still in the flesh. How soon the entire company of the Elijah class will pass beyond the veil and the Kingdom be ushered in with power and great glory is not definitely stated in the Bible.

While in this condition Bible students the world over have been receiving of the Lord a special vision of the future. That is to say, through Bible study they have been learning that Messiah's Kingdom is to be inaugurated in a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation--no, nor ever shall be afterward. (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21.) They have learned that the winds of strife, the present war, have been held back for years by Divine Power, during the time when God's people have been assisted in Bible study, symbolically spoken of as the sealing of the saints in their foreheads. Revelation 7:1-4. These see the four parts of the great Divine Program which will usher in the Kingdom of God, for which so long God's saints have prayed, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as in Heaven." They see that the winds represent the war; that the earthquake of Elijah's vision represents a great social revolution, which will follow the great war, lapping upon it, perhaps. They see that, following the revolution, anarchy is to be expected, symbolized by fire, consuming, destroying, the present order of things--symbolically represented by St. Peter as consuming the ecclesiastical

heavens and the social, financial and political earth, giving place to the new heavens, Messiah's Kingdom, and the new earth, society upon a new basis approved by the Kingdom.--2 Peter 3:10-13.

In none of these great experiences coming to the world will God be manifest. They will all be merely preparatory, terrible experiences, to fit and prepare man for the Voice of Eden, which will subsequently be heard, bringing the message which will be "the desire of all nations." The same Voice of Eden is mentioned by the Lord through Zephaniah the Prophet, saying that first the fire of God's jealousy will consume the present order of things; and that then, following the fire, God will "turn to the people a pure Message, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent."--Zephaniah 3:8,9.

FULFILMENT OF THE VISION BEGUN

Bible students understand that these four great features of God's Plan portrayed to Elijah have already begun a fulfilment--that the present European war is the letting loose of "the four winds of heaven"--winds of strife. It is unnecessary to say that no such war has ever before been. Official reports show that more than twelve millions of men have already been either killed, wounded or captured, in the army. The world has been getting ready for this war for forty years and wondering why it did not come sooner. The newspapers have been declaring year after year that it would surely come before Fall or before Spring. Now we see why it has been held off--that the angels were commanded of the Lord not to loose the winds until the servants of God should be "sealed in their foreheads."

This intellectual appreciation of God's Plan our Lord clearly foretold, saying to His people now living, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads and rejoice; for your deliverance draweth nigh." Bible students see these things beginning in the present war. They know what to expect in the near future. The fact that Elijah saw these things before he was taken up in the chariot of fire should not be understood to mean that all these experiences will be past before the Church will be translated, "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," but rather that all these things were shown to Elijah on the Mount of God as identified with the inauguration of the Kingdom. Then he had other experiences before he left.

R5753 : page 255

Some are inquiring why God permits such a great war. The Bible answer is that this war and all the other death experiences of our race are parts of a great Divine lesson on the exceeding sinfulness of sin. There is no war in Heaven--no sickness, no death, no sorrow,

no pain, no insane asylums, no sanitariums, no doctors-- because there is no sin there. But we have all these terrible conditions on earth because sin entered the world, as the Bible tells us, six thousand years ago, and because death is the penalty for sin--not eternal torment, as we were once taught. "The wages of sin is death"; "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Romans 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4.) The resurrection of the dead is the hope of the world, and is built upon the great sacrifice which Jesus gave when He died for our sins.

THE ANTITYPICAL ELIJAH ENCOURAGED

St. Paul, as well as Jesus, tells us about our day. He not only describes it as a day of symbolical fire, but he also assures us that all who are truly the Lord's people will be granted an opening of the eyes of their understanding to appreciate where we are. "The fire of that Day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." He tells us that all who build their faith and character with the gold, silver and precious stones of Divine Truth will pass through the fiery ordeal of this time safe--"kept by the power of God." Others who have built their faith and hope with the wood, hay and stubble of human tradition will suffer loss, though themselves may be saved by the fire. (1 Corinthians 3:11-15.) He tells us that that Day shall come upon all the world as a thief and as a snare. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that Day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all children of the light and children of the Day." Let us, therefore, walk in the light, as children of the light.-- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6.

As Elijah was discouraged until the Lord gave him the vision showing how He ultimately would be revealed through the winds, the earthquake, the fire and the still, small Voice, so it has been with the Church. There was a time during which much discouragement was felt, until the Lord began to make clear the Divine Plan by which Messiah's Kingdom would be inaugurated. Seeing this Plan, the Bible students are now lifting up their heads and rejoicing, as Jesus instructed, knowing that their deliverance will be inaugurated through the great Time of Trouble, of which they see only the beginning.

=====

R5753 : page 255

INTERESTING LETTERS

WATCH TOWER REFERENCES RE TABERNACLE SHADOWS

[FROM 1907 TO 1915]

MY DEAR PASTOR AND BROTHER:--

Excuse me for taking a few moments of your valuable

| | | | | |
|---|---|------|---|-----|
| Type Changes at Close of Age..... | " | 1911 | " | 349 |
| Typical and Antitypical Gifts and Sacrifices..... | " | 1911 | " | 415 |
| Male and Female Distinctions to Cease--when? (Luke 20:34-36)..... | " | 1909 | " | 174 |
| Moses a Mediator before Aaron a Priest..... | " | 1909 | " | 325 |
| Levites had no Inheritance..... | " | 1912 | " | 152 |
| "Urim and Thummim"..... | " | 1912 | " | 186 |
| Great Company and First Resurrection..... | " | 1912 | " | 297 |
| Were the Atonement Day Sin-offerings for the year preceding, or for the ensuing year?..... | " | 1907 | " | 230 |
| Do., do., do. | " | 1913 | " | 19 |
| Manifestation of High Priest..... | " | 1910 | " | 136 |
| White Robe of High Priest..... | " | 1910 | " | 136 |

APPLICATION OF THE RANSOM

Following references are helpful studied in connection with chapter IV., TABERNACLE SHADOWS--"The Great Day of Atonement:"

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|-----|
| World is not yet Bought..... | Year | 1912 | Page | 107 |
| Ransom Points to be Remembered..... | " | 1909 | " | 349 |
| Deliverance from the Curse..... | " | 1911 | " | 187 |
| Ransom--Application to all Mankind..... | " | 1911 | " | 151 |
| Does our Lord Now own the human race?..... | " | 1910 | " | 199 |
| "Sold all he had and Bought"..... | " | 1909 | " | 379 |
| Christ Made a Curse for Israel..... | " | 1912 | " | 197 |
| What the Church Sacrifices..... | " | 1911 | " | 390 |

WHEN THEIR HAPPY LIFE BEGAN

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:--

May the love of God be with thee! It has long been my desire to tell you my appreciation in my feeble way. Three years ago, I had the pleasure to listen to a workman in the Standard Oil Yard, Pt. Richmond, Cal. When I heard him I was amazed and coming home that night I told my wife that I had heard a man talk as none else before in my life, although I used to seek around for the Truth, but had failed to find that which I could love. My wife asked me to bring that man (Brother Starr) home, so I brought him home one night and I got some of my friends over to hear him. Thanks be to God for that night, for there began our happy life! Our home before that time was not very happy; but since then it has certainly changed. We are now consecrated to the Lord, and one of our friends, a sister, has done the same. Happiness untold in both homes is now to be found.

The Lord has been feeding us from His storehouse, and each time when we read THE WATCH TOWER, and see the letters from the friends, I simply must pray for each one of them! It has been hard for me to learn certain lessons. I have prayed for patience and would forget time and time again. I am a hard workman and my associates are very impatient. So in a recent WATCH TOWER you told us to pray for love to be cultivated in us, and in the evening report to

our Heavenly Father. Since then I have had great blessings along the line of patience. Both my wife and I love the brethren, for among them we spend all the time we can, thanking our Heavenly Father for his loving kindness to us. My wife is doing colporteur work as much as her strength permits, and we have both had great blessings therefrom. The six volumes have brought us untold happiness. Daily we pray the Lord to give you strength. We love you and ask you to include us in your petitions to the Lord that we may be among that Little Flock.

BROTHER AND SISTER CHRISTIAN LARSEN.--Cal.

=====

page 256

International Bible Students Association Classes

STUDIES AND LECTURES UNDER THE AUSPICES OF PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION