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BETHEL HYMNS FOR DECEMBER

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
December follow: (1) 249; (2) 296; (3) Vow; (4) 145; (5) 324;
(6) 105; (7) 15; (8) 58; (9) 303; (10) 91; (11) 267; (12) 114;
(13) 325; (14) 87; (15) 120; (16) 7; (17) 14; (18) 195; (19)
44; (20) 216; (21) 255; (22) 273; (23) 161; (24) 194; (25) 16;
(26) 166; (27) 149; (28) 299; (29) 285; (30) 310; (31) 34.

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I. B. S. A. BEREAN BIBLE STUDIES
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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

WAR LEADING TOWARD A CLIMAX

THE GREAT WAR continues to rage. More and more all the nations are being dragged into it, as intimated by the Lord through the Prophet. (Jeremiah 25:15-28.) One is reminded of St. James' words, "Ye kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain." "Ye ask [pray] and receive not [answers to your prayers], because ye ask amiss"--selfishly. Again we read, "Go to, ye rich men. Weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you."--James 4:2,3; 5:1.

Regardless of their branch of the human family, all sincere men must sympathize greatly with the terrible conditions prevailing in Europe. The French are finally awakening to the fact that they are almost exhausted. They have no further reserves to call to the colors. They are patriotically using their money and exhausting their credit. They are convinced that they cannot win, that it will be either devastation or a bargain-peace. They know of no reason whatsoever as to why they are at war with their neighbor. The Italians are in much the same predicament, and are fearing insurrection, anarchy. The Russians are in terrible plight, also. The novelty of the war has worn off. The glory of marching into Berlin has faded. Revolution is threatening. The Balkan nations and Greece are perplexed and fearful under the demands, the entreaties and the threats of the great warring nations, compelling them to participate in the strife or threatening their future existence.

Only Germany and Great Britain realize what the war is about--that it is commercial; that it is for the liberty of the seas and the profits of world commerce. Both of these great and intelligent nations now realize that they have gotten into a struggle ten-fold more severe than they had ever anticipated. Both would like to be out of the war, but both fear the future, realizing that no such combination could ever again be effected. Both are on the verge of financial bankruptcy, and wisely are borrowing as much as they can and seeking to avoid the thought that they could never pay the interest on their debts without risking revolution of their peoples against the heavy taxes

that would be necessary.

The warring nations are jealous of America and bitter against her for her neutrality. Americans are snubbed and insulted everywhere in Europe and even in Australia. The best intentions of our President and his own personality are ridiculed--so blind are the poor people in respect to the real issues of the war. Surely things are leading on toward the climax when every man's hand will be against his neighbor and against his brother and when there will be no peace to those who go out or to those who come in.--Ezekiel 38:21; Zechariah 8:10.

WAR NECESSITIES COST LIBERTIES

Few are aware of the extent to which war's necessities are interfering with the liberties of the peoples of Europe. Military necessity is rapidly pushing aside all the rights of the people in the great Magna Charta of British liberty. We are not saying that this is unwise, or that we could do better under the circumstances. We are merely noting the fact that the people are giving up their liberties as one of the costs of the war. In Great Britain large factories are taken over by the Government and turned from peaceful industry to the manufacture of

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munitions of war. The employees are required to continue to work the same as before. Other manufacturers and employers are forbidden by the Government to employ any one who has been connected with these factories taken over by the Government unless the applicant has a full release by the Government. This is difficult to get.

Canada and Australia are being drawn into the whirlpool and are losing their liberties, too. At the beginning of the war it was a question as to what the Canadians and Australians would do to help the mother country--voluntarily. All that condition is changed. Instead, the Government is discussing whether or not it will conscript Canadian and Australian young men and force them into the war. And so great is the change that has come over the people that the right of the mother country in this respect seems not even to be questioned by the majority.

Over and beyond all this, the Government is taking a record of every individual in Canada and Australia, as well as in Great Britain, with full particulars practically including all of the individual's affairs. This is called the War Census Act and recites: "Two things are certain--one, that we must continue to fight with every ounce of energy we possess; the other, that we can do this only by a complete organization of all our resources. By no other means can we continue this life and death struggle.

* * *

"Every pair of hands must be occupied. Every resource

must be developed. Every citizen must give to the country in labor and money the utmost of his capacity."

As a further war measure personal liberty is being taken away under what is known as "The Defense of the Realm Act." Under this Act the Government holds absolute control of the press and of the lives and liberties of all the people. A Briton may be arrested and imprisoned

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for a year or more without even knowing the charge against him or having any opportunity whatever to defend himself--the act of habeas corpus being set aside. This law, now operative in Great Britain, is being extended to the Canadians and Australians, who, apparently, will meekly submit to it. If any one had prophesied such a condition of things three years ago, he would have been counted a fool.

Our Brethren are not anarchistic, surely. Undoubtedly they will seek to be subject to the "powers that be" as long as they be--except wherever their consciences might be impinged.

Needless to say that in Germany and all the other nations at war conditions are much the same, or worse. How long it will be ere our own favored land shall become involved we know not. However,

"Through all the tumult and the strife
We hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in our souls--
How can we keep from singing"--

that the King of Glory is at the door, and that His glorious Empire of Righteousness and Truth is about to be ushered in! Well may we be content with whatever the Lord's providence may mark out for us, knowing that all things will work together for good to those who love Him--called ones according to His purpose!

NATIONAL AMITY AFTER THE WAR

Prof. Bertrand Russell, of Cambridge, England, quotes the German historian Eduard Meyer, that "So far as one can foresee, peace will be only a short truce; England will use the first opportunity of beginning the fight again, better prepared, at the head of a new coalition if not of the old one, and a long series of difficult and bloody wars will follow, until at last the definite decision is obtained."

Professor Russell proceeds: "Is it certain that these two nations will continue to fight and hate each other until one of them is utterly broken? Fortunately no country consists wholly of professors, not even Germany; and it may be hoped that more sanity is to be found among

those who have not been made mad by much learning. For the moment, both countries are wholly blind to their own faults, and utterly fantastic in the crimes which they attribute to the enemy. A vast but shadowy economic conflict has been invented to rationalize their hostility which, in fact, is as irrational and instinctive as that of dogs who snarl and fly at each other in the street. The cynic who said, 'Speech has been given us to conceal our thoughts,' might well have added, 'Thought has been given us to conceal our passions from ourselves.' At least I am sure that this is true of thought in war-time.

* * *

"France and Russia each has its myth, for without myth no great national upheaval is possible. But their myths are different from ours, whereas the myths of England and Germany are all but identical. Each believes itself a great peace-loving nation, powerful, but always using its power to further worthy ends. Each believes that the other, with an incredible perfidy inspired by the basest jealousy, suddenly stirred up the war, after many years of careful preparation, military in the one case, diplomatic [and naval] in the other. Each believes that only the utter humiliation of the other can secure the peace of the world and the ordered progress of civilization. In each, a pacifist minority urges moderation in the use of victory, while yielding to none in the conviction that victory is the indispensable preliminary to any future reconstruction. Each is absolutely confident of victory, and prepared for any sacrifice, however great, in order to secure victory. Each is unable to believe that the other is sincere in the opinion which it professes; its own innocence and the other's guilt are as clear as noonday, and can be denied only by the most abject hypocrisy.

"Both cannot be right in these opinions, and a priori it is not likely that either is right. No nation was ever so virtuous as each believes itself, and none was ever so wicked as each believes the other. If these beliefs survive the war, no peace will be possible. Both nations have concentrated their energies so wholly on making war that they have rendered it almost impossible to make peace. In normal times civilized and humane people find a difficulty in believing that they do well to butcher each other. In order to overcome this feeling, journalists have filled the minds of their readers with such appalling accounts of the enemies' crimes that hatred has come to seem a noble indignation, and it has grown difficult to believe that any of our opponents deserve to live. Yet peace, if it is to be real, must be accompanied by respect, and must bring with it some sense of justice toward rival claims. What these claims are, and what justice demands if they are to be reconciled, must be realized in some degree before the peace, if the peace is to heal the wounds which the war is inflicting.

* * *

"When the Germans, with their usual incautious explicitness, made the announcement, 'Our future is on the sea,' most Englishmen felt, almost without conscious thought, that the Germans might as well have announced that their future lay through the death of England's greatness and the starvation of our population.

* * *

"Because the apprehension was real and deep-seated, the hostility was rather blind and instinctive; although, in the region of conscious thought, the hopes of an understanding were not abandoned, yet in that deeper region out of which effective action springs, the belief in a future conflict had taken root and could no longer be dislodged.

* * *

"The Germans, in spite of their progress, their energy, and their population, are very inferior in colonial possessions, not only to England and Russia, but also to France. This seems to them unjust; but wherever they turn to try to acquire new colonies, England and England's navy block the way, because of our friendship with France, or our sensitiveness about India, or some other interest in the complicated web of our foreign policy.

"German aggressiveness, real and obnoxious as it has become, is the result of experience. Germany cannot, as we do, acquire colonies absent-mindedly, without intention, and almost without effort. When colonies were easier to acquire than they are now, Germany had not yet entered into the competition; and since Germany became a great Power, it has been handicapped by naval inferiority and by the necessity of defending two frontiers. It is these accidents of history and geography, rather than innate wickedness, which have produced German aggressiveness. The aims of German policy are closely similar to those which we have always pursued, but its methods cannot be the unobtrusive methods which we have usually adopted, because such methods, in the circumstances, would achieve nothing.

"Colonial ambitions are no doubt one reason why Germany has developed a navy; but another and more imperative reason is the necessity of safeguarding foreign trade.

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"In the time of Bismarck, Germany had not yet become a great, industrial nation; it was independent of foreign food, and its exports of manufactures were insignificant. Its industrial expansion dates from the introduction of the Bessemer process in 1879, by which its supplies of iron became possible to work at a profit. From that time onward, German industrial progress has been extraordinarily

rapid; more and more, Germany has tended to become dependent, like England, upon the possibility of importing food and exporting manufactures. In this war, as we see, Germany is just able, by very painful economy,

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to subsist upon the stock of food in the country; but another ten years of such development as was taking place before the war would have made this impossible. High agrarian protection, which alone could have retarded the process, was naturally disliked by the manufacturers and the working classes, and could not be carried beyond a certain point for fear of leading to a triumph of Socialism.

"It thus became obvious that in a few years' time Germany would be liable to defeat by starvation in any war with a superior naval power. In 1900, when the Germans decided to build a great navy, the Triple Alliance was weaker than France and Russia on the sea. The wish not to be inferior to France and Russia is enough to account for the beginnings of the German Navy; the rivalry with us may perhaps have been no part of the original intention, but merely a result of the suspicions produced in England by the German program. However that may be, it ought to have been obvious to the Germans that a strong navy was sure to make us hostile, and would therefore not serve the purposes for which it was intended unless it was stronger than our navy. But it could not be supposed that we should submit to the existence of a navy stronger than our own, unless we had first been utterly and hopelessly defeated; and there was no way of defeating us except by first having a navy stronger than our own.

"For these reasons, the German policy was inherently incapable of success. And yet, without success, all industrial progress and all colonial expansion remain perpetually at England's mercy. If we ask ourselves how we should feel if we were similarly at the mercy of Germany, we shall perhaps begin to understand why the Germans hate us. And yet we can hardly feel any sense of guilt, because a supreme navy is for us a matter of life and death.

"This dilemma must be faced, if we are to understand the conflict of England and Germany; and not regard it as merely due to wickedness on one side or on the other. After the war, sooner or later, exactly the same problem will have to be faced again. The native energy of the Germans cannot be permanently checked by defeat; after a longer or shorter period of recuperation, they will again feel that commercial safety and colonial expansion demand a strong navy, if they are not to be content to live in sufferance and to be compelled to bow to England's will on all occasions of serious dispute. The problem is a new one, since hitherto England has been the only nation dependent for subsistence on food imported by sea, and England has had unquestioned naval supremacy. But if we

are to avoid the century of internecine warfare contemplated by Eduard Meyer, we must find some solution of the problem, and not be content merely to hope that, whenever war comes, we shall be victorious. Germany's industrial ambitions, at least, are entirely legitimate; and they alone make some security for German trade an imperative necessity. It is not only justice that makes it necessary to find a solution, but also self-preservation."

WHY CHURCH UNION LAGS

"Anything that even suggests an endeavor to close up divisions of followers of Christ claims favorable countenance from a generous Christian, regardless of whether it appears practicable or not.

"It was doubtless on this presumption that all other Protestant denominations of any consequence in this country responded amiably to the Episcopalian request for committees to be named which should join in summoning and organizing this 'world-conference.'

"And these commissions, when named, could not courteously do less than confer with the Episcopalian commission whenever the latter desired. So there have been many meetings and much resolving that it would truly be a beautiful thing if all churches would unite.

"But at the end of every meeting the outcome might be summed up in this--that if the Episcopalians think they can do anything with such a world-conference, they are welcome to go ahead and do it...

"What's the reason? Why aren't the other churches aroused?

"Is it because other churches don't want union? Not if they understand themselves. But it is for another reason, which is hard to say under bonds of common courtesy.

"Nevertheless, no relation between parties standing at different view-points can be substantial without frankness. The time has come when frankness is needed on this subject. So here is the plain truth:

"The reason why other churches have not taken up enthusiastically the Episcopalian proposals for a world-wide congress on the union of Christendom is simply because they have not yet seen reason to believe that Episcopalians in general want unity enough to make concessions to procure it."

The Continent.

"WINNING OF IMMORTALITY"

Prof. Frederick Palmer, A.B., D.D., Harvard Divinity Faculty, in his book entitled "The Winning of Immortality" says: "I have endeavored to sketch the growth of the doctrine of a future life from its appearance in Hebrew history through the line of Christian development to the present time. In doing this we come

upon the fact that the belief which was counted orthodox in the first Christian centuries was different in one notable respect from that generally counted orthodox today. For while we regard it proper and Christian to hold that immortality is necessarily inherent in humanity, this was then regarded as improper and unchristian, the only true Christian view being that immortality was a victorious prize to be won through fellowship with Christ.

"I cannot but think that their orthodoxy was wiser than ours. For I am sure that one great deterrent to believing in a future life is, with many persons, the dread thought of the vast multitudes, the majority of mankind, according to some theologies, who, it is asserted, are condemned to conscious existence in wretchedness and torture forever. Such must be the result if perpetual existence is a necessity inherent in humanity. But if it is contingent; if the soul is not necessarily immortal, but may become so; if the failure to attain immortality proceeds along ordinary non-arbitrary lines, and reaches a result which we see here imaged in the gradual elimination of decadent life, then the processes of the next world are redeemed from horror and made intelligible, almost verifiable.

"Immortality as a necessity seems to me to have little to say for itself. As a goal to be attained, it is the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus."

(Preface pp. 9-11.)

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"PLATO MISTAKEN FOR CHRIST"

S. D. McConnell, D.D., D.C.L., Rector of All Souls Church, New York, in his book, "The Evolution of Immortality," states:

"A careful study of the ante-Nicene 'Fathers' can but convince one that in and among them a number of ethnic notions were struggling to express, each in its own terms, the truth which Christ had dropped among them. The early Christians had all been reared either in the religions of Judea or Greece or Rome. Those among them who had been reared Jews unconsciously transferred their idea of a corporate or tribal immortality from their old faith to their new, and their imaginations were filled with the hope of a 'Second Coming' and a 'New Jerusalem.'

"Those who were Greeks brought to the new religion the Platonic idea that the individual soul is indestructible, being in fact an articulate portion of the substance of the mind of God. Those of Roman antecedents, having no inherited belief of a future life of any kind, were better prepared to comprehend the truth of Christ. The interaction of all these fragments of previous philosophy produced a confusion and uncertainty of mind which was not clarified for five centuries. Then the masterful Augustine, the man who fixed the lines in which the thought of the civilized world ran from the sixth century to the nineteenth, took Plato's doctrine of the inherent immortality

of the soul, disengaged it from metempsychosis and transmigration, and gained for it a general credence which it has held to this day." (Pages 45,46.)

"Tertullian in his treatises On the Soul and On the Resurrection of the Flesh gives by far the fullest presentation of what was commonly believed in his circles; but it is quite impossible to make him consistent with himself or with other Christian writers of the same period. Upon the whole, however, he leaves the impression, afterwards confirmed and fixed by Augustine, that he believes the soul to have an independent existence of its own, and to be of its own nature indestructible. The truth of the case seems to be that as the Greek influence gained the domination in the early Church the Platonic doctrine of a natural immortality which it brought with it came to be accepted. The notion was withstood from the beginning as being subversive of the very essence of Christianity. Theophilus (Ad. Autolyicum II. 27), Irenaeus (Adv. Haeres. II. 34), Clement of Alexandria (The Pedagogues, I. 3), Arnobius (Cont. Gent. II. 24), and most weighty of all, Athanasius in his treatise on the Incarnation of the Word of God, all strenuously fought against it as a Pagan error which brought to naught the work of Christ.

"They were defeated, however, and the conception prevailed which is vulgarly current today, of an immortal soul and a mortal body, temporarily joined, then severed, then reunited in an imperishable personality. Its currency has probably confused and obstructed the work of Christ among men more than all other obstacles combined.

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A Pagan speculation has masqueraded so long as an elemental Christian truth that now, when the intelligent world is well disposed to receive and comprehend Jesus' revelation of a life to come, Plato stands across the path and is commonly mistaken for Christ." (Pages 47,48.)

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PROPER BASIS OF HONOR IN THE CHURCH

QUESTION.--Matthew 20:27 reads, "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Is it a proper desire to be chief among the Lord's people, and are we to understand that the positions in the Kingdom of Heaven will be assigned entirely on the basis of the amount of service we render here?

Answer.--The Lord had been pointing out to His disciples a certain weakness on their part--a desire to be the greatest--a desire that is general in the human family--an ambitious

spirit. The context says that amongst the Gentiles there are some who exercise a lordship and have others to serve them in a menial way, but that this was not to be the case amongst the disciples of Jesus. They were to be actuated by a different spirit. With the followers of Christ there is not to be a spirit to dominate, to rule others, but a spirit of love, which seeks to serve others, to do for others, a spirit which is willing to sacrifice personal interest in the service of others.

On this basis we consider further the words of this text. There will be some among the Lord's people who will be chief. It is necessarily so in any company or class or association where people are not all equal in talents--where some are born with more talents and some with less. Some one is bound to be chief. An absolute equality is not possible.

It is advisable, too, that there be some among the saints of God to guide the Church. What, then, is to be the standard as to who is to be chief? Shall it be the one who would browbeat the others? No; this is not the standard. Shall it be one who will have a masterful influence and pleasant words, who will dominate merely because of some talent, or because of superior education or wealth--something of this kind? No; this could not be the standard. What, then, will be the standard as to those who will be recognized as chief ones in the Church?

HAVE NO AMBITION FOR PERSONAL GLORY

We reply, We should look for those who have most of the spirit of service. He who renders the greatest amount of service and brings the greatest spiritual blessing to the Class--the one who tries most to truly serve--consider him your chief. While our Lord's words were addressed to all the Apostles, and not merely to one individual, yet they are applicable also to the individual. The thought should come home to each of our hearts, that if any of us have ambition for service in some special capacity, we are not to do like worldly people. We should take the opposite track, and leave any honor of men out of the question entirely. We should leave God to attend to that matter as shall seem to Him best, and be content merely to be a servant to the brethren. Let the Lord see how willing you are to serve in any manner.

The person without any ambition never amounts to anything. We need to have ambition if we are sowing or plowing or whatever we are doing--we need ambition to spur us on to do whatever we do in a satisfactory manner. And so if we have the opportunity of serving the Truth, we should seek to serve it in the most capable manner possible. Otherwise we should not be capable servants of the Lord.

But we are to lay aside any desire to be chief so far as ambition for personal glory is concerned. We are to seek to serve the Lord the best we know how. If you can serve the Lord in some respects better than I, and I

can learn something from you, well and good. And if afterwards you can learn something from me, so be it. True, we should be patterning after that which is especially commendable and doing all we can to further the

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Lord's Cause. And this service should be prompted by love. Any service not prompted by love is not acceptable in the sight of the Lord.

HUMILITY A PRIME REQUISITE

The Apostle Paul says that those who desire the office of a bishop are desiring a good thing. It is a noble service. This office in the Apostles' day was not the exalted official position it is understood to be in the nominal church systems of today. A bishop then was a humble, untitled servant of the Church, caring for the interests of the sheep. Every servant of the Church should seek to be efficient, should love to be, as far as he is able, a caretaker over the flock of God. Amongst these Elder brethren, pastors of the congregation, there will be those of different natural abilities. Each should seek to use his talents, his opportunities, in the service of the Lord, of the brethren and of the Truth.

It is a pity that any of the Lord's people today forget the standard which the Master is here setting up. These seem to think that the office of Elder has become theirs by right, instead of realizing that the appointment to this office is by vote of the Ecclesia, the company of the Lord's people, and is to be the voice of the Church. We believe that the attitude of each one should be to be willing to accept the voice of the Ecclesia, the Church, implicitly. If he has become a member of the congregation by casting in his lot with the others, he has thus become subject to the rules that represent the controlling majority, whether it be a majority of one or of a larger per cent. Having done this, he should seek to continue in this attitude, whether chosen an Elder or whether another is chosen.

Very frequently a congregation makes the mistake of selecting for Elder a brother who does not have the proper qualifications. This sometimes means dissatisfaction on the part of some of the Class, and leads to the breaking away of some to form another Class. We think this is not the wise course. We think that if the Class made a mistake, the Lord is able to overrule it for good; and that therefore those who withdraw lose some experiences which would be valuable to them.

We are not always sure, however, that the Class made a mistake. How can we know but that the Lord has some lesson in this matter? If we have asked the Lord's blessing on whoever would be the choice, we should abide by that choice. If the one not chosen has ability for properly presenting the Truth and knows a number of places where he can be used and useful, we think that the brother

should take advantage of whatever opportunities may present themselves. He need not leave the Class, however. He could perform whatever service came to his hand. Perhaps he could use his time and talent in Class Extension work--not feeling restricted in this direction because he was not elected Elder. He might go out and find opportunities for service. So the change in Elders might mean to the brother not elected or not reelected that the Lord was indicating to him another field of usefulness. The Lord's providences might be leading out for wider influence and usefulness for him.

We should not be influenced by what men of the world shall say or think of us. This is immaterial; and it is immaterial what the Church shall think. We should seek to please the Lord. We should not esteem ourselves too highly, but rather give a preference to others in our estimation. Positions in the Kingdom of Heaven, we understand, will be awarded according to the degree of the development of the fruits of the Holy Spirit; and this means a love which will lead to zeal in the Lord's service.

SELECTION OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

Numerous inquiries have come to us indicating that some of the brethren have difficulty in applying the suggestions given in Vol. VI. on the subject of election of servants for the Classes.

It was not our thought there to lay down an invariable rule on the subject. The Bible gives none, and no one else has a right to establish such a rule. Our suggestion was that whenever possible the election should be unanimous, and unless seventy-five per cent. of the Class, or more, favored a brother's election, it would be rather unwise for him to accept the office--the service. We did not by this mean that a minority of twenty-five or thirty per cent. should be encouraged to obstruct the Class and hinder an election.

Strictly speaking, a majority of one in a Class would decide any matter except as love might come in to urge a consideration of the sentiments of others. If for instance, a Class numbered one hundred, fifty-one would have a right to decide respecting who should be the servants of the Church, and the other forty-nine should very quietly acquiesce, recognizing the fact that they constitute only a minority, and should loyally strive to support the will of the majority.

Only the spirit of love and the best interests of all in the Class suggests more than fifty-one per cent. Love should strive for a unanimous vote. But how might this be obtained? We will offer a suggestion.

Suppose that in a Class of one hundred, six Elders were considered as necessary for the service. A, B, C, D, E, F, would represent available candidates of more or less ability. A might have a hundred votes; B, ninety; C, eighty; D, seventy; E, sixty; F, fifty. Under a strict voting on the lines of preference only two would be selected

on a ninety per cent. basis; but our thought would be that the entire six might be unanimously elected, if they were on the average as good material as the Class possessed, and if nothing were known derogatory to their moral character.

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It is a mistake to think that the standards established by St. Paul are to be taken literally, for no one would be found fully up to all the requirements. The Apostle has stated what the ideal Elder would be. Each voter should have this ideal before his mind in thinking of the will of the Lord; but the Class is not to be left without an Elder unless there are serious blemishes.

Our Lord similarly set a perfect example before us when He said, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.) Who is perfect in the sense that God is perfect? "There is none righteous; no, not one." (Romans 3:10.) The Master evidently meant that we should not measure ourselves by a low standard, but by the perfect standard, that thus we would be assisting ourselves up to the grandest ideals in respect to our own lives and characters and in respect to those chosen to be Elders and examples to the Flock.

Be it always remembered that none are to vote except those professing full consecration, manifested by the usual symbol--immersion in water. Such as have not symbolized their consecration, are not to be disowned as brethren, but should be considered so immature as not to be competent to express an opinion in respect to who would be qualified to serve the Church, and, of course, would not be qualified to be servants themselves.

RE THE VOW

Another question which here and there is obtruding itself is, Should any one be chosen as a servant of the

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Church who has not taken the special Vow which so many of us have found very helpful, and which has been recommended to all?

We cannot make this simple Vow a test of brotherhood; for, even though we believe that the Lord has especially brought it forth at this time and that to a certain extent He intends it to serve as a test amongst the consecrated, nevertheless the Bible does not authorize us to make this a test of brotherhood. It is a matter of judgment rather than of Divine direction, just as the candidate's misuse of the English language, or uncouthness of manner might properly enough be taken into consideration, although not mentioned in the Bible amongst the qualifications for eldership.

It would rejoice us greatly to know that all the dear

Elders and Deacons amongst the Lord's people everywhere could see eye to eye with respect to the reasonableness of the Vow, and its harmony with the Divine Word and with our consecration Vow, to which it is, as it were, a blue fringe, or border and finish. One can scarcely refrain from wondering what objection any Christian brother or sister could have to that Vow. To some of us it seems as though it would imply either something wrong as respects their heart intentions or something defective in their reasoning faculties. However, we are not competent to judge so closely. The Master said, "Judge not."

Our thought is that in selecting Elders or Deacons a preference might well be given to those who have taken the Vow and who see eye to eye on this subject. Nevertheless, if the brethren who are competent to lead Classes are acceptable in every other way and are not opposers of the Vow, they might be chosen. This would be especially true of those who declare that they are living up to all the requirements of the Vow to the best of their ability, and merely decline to take it because of fear that somehow or other the taking of this simple Vow might injure them while helping others. We may not understand the processes of their reasoning nor the attitude of their hearts, but we may under such circumstances pass over what we cannot understand nor appreciate.

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COLPORTEURS AND DRAMA WORKERS

IT SEEMS very wonderful to us that, notwithstanding the fact that there are nearly nine millions of copies of **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES**, in twenty different languages in the hands of the public, the demand continues as it does. Our output for August was over twenty thousand copies.

We have recently heard of a Colporteur who felt a little hesitancy about selling **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** in view of their reference to the year 1914, and who, therefore, turned his attention to the sale of **SCENARIOS**. In our opinion the brother took a wrong view of matters. **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** are not prophecies. The fact that our expectations respecting the "change" of the Church in 1914 were not realized does not signify that the prophecies failed. Our readers should know that we never prophesied anything. We merely gave our opinions respecting prophecies and gave the reader the reasons for those opinions, showing the chapter and verse. Nothing in the Bible declared that the Church would be glorified by the fall of 1914. The author did express it as his opinion that the Church would be glorified by that time, and gave his reasons for so thinking. Now that the date has

passed and the Church is not glorified, the author is not disappointed. All the while he wished the Lord's will to be done and none other.

What the Scriptures did clearly seem to teach, and what we did seek positively to affirm, was that, so far as the Bible chronology would show, the Times of the Gentiles would expire with the fall of 1914. Some time ago we pointed out that this expiration of the Times of the Gentiles need not be understood that they would be dispossessed at that date, but rather that their dispossession proceedings might be expected to begin. (See also THE WATCH TOWER, July 1, 1904, article on Universal Anarchy.) We gave the illustration of a lease of property. At the expiration of the lease the tenant should move; but, if he still seek to retain possession, the owner of the property is justified in taking forcible possession and in putting out the tenant and all his belongings.

This seems to be the course of events as respects the nations of the world. They do not recognize the times in which we are living--that the New Dispensation has been ushered in, and that the time has come for Messiah to take control of earth's affairs. The kings of earth would laugh at any suggestion that they should resign their thrones and kingdoms to Messiah. The bearer of such a message would probably be looked upon as a lunatic. The Lord, instead of sending such a useless message, has begun dispossession proceedings. He is allowing the nations to rage against each other, to weaken each other, to destroy each other's property, to humiliate each other. Thus the winds of strife in the present war are leading on to the great social earthquake; and it, in turn, will lead to the fiery cataclysm of anarchy, that in due time, as St. Paul declares, everything may be removed that is shakable, in order that Messiah's Kingdom, which is unshakable, may be fully established.--Hebrews 12:27-29.

As for the time for the completion of the Church, we do not know it and never claimed to know it. We merely expressed the opinion that it would occur some time before the greatest violence of the great Time of Trouble. We still think the same, and expect that the Church, the antitypical Elijah, will all have passed beyond the veil before the anarchy predicted in the Bible.

SUGGESTIONS TO COLPORTEURS

The great war now raging in Europe seems to be the beginning of the end of Gentile Times. Instead of feeling ashamed or discouraged, we feel the reverse. We are applying now the words of our Master, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh." (Luke 21:28.) Any who are not rejoicing, but who, on the contrary, are feeling discouraged, despondent and disappointed and ashamed of the Truth, have evidently wrong impressions. Such should speedily correct such

impressions and begin to share in the rejoicing that the Savior counseled, and should begin to share in the great opportunities offered for the serving out of the Truth. Surely there never was a time of greater soul-hunger amongst mankind in respect to the Word of God! We know nothing so good to give them as the six volumes of *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*. In our opinion they need no change nor alteration.

It is not necessary for us to print something and insert it in the books saying that our expectations of the "change" of the Church before October, 1914, did not come true, for sensible people would not need such a

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notice. They would see that that suggestion or expectation had not been realized. But they would see also that the expectation based upon the prophetic Word is being realized. We are in the days of the Son of Man. The nations are angry, and shortly His wrath will come. Then the various other steps leading on to the full accomplishment of the great blessing of Messiah's Kingdom will be in order. We urge the Colporteurs, therefore, not to permit any misconception or false shame to interfere with their scattering of the only literature in the world that gives an accurate and reasonable account of the Bible program, and that has shown in advance experiences upon which the world has already begun to enter.

* * *

Nevertheless, we have no objection whatever to any Colporteur changing from the sale of the *STUDIES* over to the sale of the *DRAMA SCENARIO*, if he prefers it. It is merely a question of which you make your specialty. If selling the *STUDIES*, you do well to call attention before leaving to the *SCENARIO* advising the great value of it for children, as well as for adults. It is written in

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simple language. Its ninety-six lectures are brief, condensed, pointed, in simple language and interesting to everybody. No better book could possibly be put into the hands of Christian parents from which to teach their children something respecting creation and the Bible in an interesting and historical way.

Likewise, those who specialize with the *SCENARIO* should, of course, inquire on every suitable occasion if the *STUDIES* are in the home and are being read and found helpful. So doing, especially when delivering the *SCENARIO*, you might be the means of removing prejudice and of deepening interest.

PRICE OF SCENARIOS

When the SCENARIOS were gotten out, it was not our thought that they would ever be colporteurd; hence no special Colporteur price was arranged for. At the request of Colporteurs, we have fixed a retail price on them now as follows:

The paper-bound edition in three parts.....\$0.30
" cloth- " " red edges..... .68
" De Luxe " gilt edged, fine paper.... .98

Or, because we have a large quantity of these on hand, Colporteurs may sell them at \$0.89.

We will supply these books to the Colporteurs as follows:

The paper-bound sets.....\$0.10
" 68-cent, cloth edition..... .25
" De Luxe edition (to get rid of large stock)
will go below cost until it is reduced, namely, .38

These prices do not include postage or freight or expressage. These prices are open to any of the Colporteurs regularly enrolled--or to any of the Bible Students' Classes, or in quantities of not less than twelve to any WATCH TOWER subscriber.

Our thought is that the numerous illustrations of these books make them very attractive to the public. We find that nearly all who purchase them read them, which is sometimes not the case with the STUDIES. Quite a number thus far have been brought into the Truth through the DRAMA SCENARIO.

EUREKA DRAMA SUCCESSFUL

The EUREKA DRAMA is being blessed of the Lord beyond our expectations. We feared that on account of the popularity of moving pictures, the EUREKA DRAMA would awaken interest only in country districts not supplied with moving picture theatres, etc. Experience is proving the contrary. It is demonstrated by experience that people will come to the EUREKA DRAMA and sit for two hours watching the DRAMA pictures and listening to the DRAMA lectures with rapt attention, altogether in preference to going to a picture show. Indeed, the class of people attending the moving picture theatres is not always the intelligent and those of lofty sentiments. This is manifest from the character of the plays chiefly patronized. The theatre managers know the tastes of their audiences. Indeed, some of the good people whom we would interest are far from being regular attendants at picture theatres.

For a time we tried to interest theatre managers in presenting the DRAMA. Then to meet their ideas, we consented to cut some of the entertainments in two. Finally the theatre people wanted us to eliminate the lectures and slides almost entirely and merely to show their audiences the beautiful films. This has led us to the decision that

the regular DRAMA can be hereafter shown only in its full, complete form. What films we still have must be saved for presentation to the sort of audiences that will appreciate the lectures and the slides as well.

Where theatres are unused on Sundays, and can be obtained by the Classes at very moderate rates permitting the showing of the complete DRAMA in its four parts, the Society will be willing to cooperate by loaning the DRAMA free and literature free--the Class bearing all the expenses of transportation of DRAMA and operators. The operator of the DRAMA must be one who has already had a training with the Society, in order to guarantee proper presentation, and so that the valuable films be not destroyed. Ordinary operators are not capable of handling our DRAMA. It requires at least three months' careful preparation for this.

But, returning to the EUREKA DRAMA: It is being presented everywhere, often in high schools and colleges. Both professors and students are charmed with the pictures and with our wonderful phonograph records and our free SCENARIOS. At the colleges they object to the slide advertising Pastor Russell's STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. We do not object to the omission of this slide when it is not desired. We believe that all of the schools should be interested in the EUREKA DRAMA; but we would not think of showing it to any except the advanced grades, unless the children were accompanied by their seniors.

Classes not yet supplied with the EUREKA DRAMA can find the description and prices in our issue of October 15, page 316.

"LIKE AS A FATHER PITIETH"

The night is so dark, and the way seems so long,
As we sadly and wearily struggle along;
So often we stumble, so frequently fall,
And the fear oft assails, "Shall we fail, after all?"

Poor hearts! we forget that the Master above
Ever watcheth each step in His infinite love,
And like as a father doth pity, the Lord
Ever pities all those who do trust in His Word.

No tear ever falls, when the heart's wound is sore,
But the Lord's tender heart keenly suffered the more;
No cup His hand pours, which He fills to the brim,
But His own loving lips were pressed first to its rim.

No night can be darker than that which He knew,
And no waters be deeper than those He passed through.
Ah! then, when thy cross seems too heavy to bear,
Oh, remember thy Lord doth know, pity and care!

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

PLAIN FOOD FOR CLEAR BRAINS

--NOVEMBER 14.--DANIEL 1:1-21.--

JEWISH CAPTIVES--THE BABYLONIAN COURT--THE KING'S
DAINTIES--DANIEL AND HIS CHUMS--LOYALTY TO PRINCIPLE
AND ITS ADVANTAGE--PRINCIPLES ARE ETERNAL--
SELF-CONTROL BRINGS BLESSINGS.

"Watch ye; stand fast in the faith; quit you
like men; be strong."--1 Corinthians 16:13.

TODAY'S Study is specially selected for the
World's Temperance Sunday. How glad
we are that the subject of temperance is
making such grand headway throughout the
world! We will not controvert the claim
of some that they are strong enough to use
intoxicating liquors wisely, without injury,
and to their profit. This may be true of
some; but all will agree that such are the
minority--that the vast majority of humanity
have not sufficient self-control to pursue such a course.
With the majority, undoubtedly the safe course is to
decide, once and forever, that they will never use intoxicating
liquors as a beverage, unless medically prescribed
as an absolute necessity.

When we consider the worries of life, the crime, the
headaches and the heartaches directly traceable to alcohol,
it seems amazing that the wiser and the better balanced
of humanity should be unwilling to curtail their own
liberties in the interest of their fellowmen in general.
The temperance sentiment--the total abstinence sentiment
--is growing everywhere, our own nation grandly leading.
We must not, however, deceive ourselves into thinking
that the world has turned from alcohol. Undoubtedly no
radical, permanent results will be reached until Messiah's
Kingdom shall take the full control of earth's affairs.
We may be sure that thereafter nothing shall be permitted
to hurt or to injure in all God's holy Kingdom.--
Isaiah 11:9.

The good news that the Russians had abolished the
use of vodka in their army and throughout the nation has
been offset by later news that the people, giving up their
usual intoxicant--vodka--have taken to private distilling,
and as great intemperance as ever prevails. The report
that the use of liquors in the armies of France and England
has been abolished, and that in the home lands the
temperance spirit is growing, is offset by the terrible
news that in all the armies it has been found necessary to
stimulate the soldiers with alcoholic beverages, just prior

to ordering the men to make one of those terrible charges against entrenched foes in which sometimes a half and sometimes all of the chargers are wounded or killed. The nervous strain incidental to such a charge seems to require that sensible men shall to some extent befog their senses in order to participate willingly.

How terrible a thing is this war! How shocking it is that men should be half-drugged before being commanded to go to their death! Alas; how absurd the claim that

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the kingdoms at war are kingdoms of Christ, and that the world in general is Christendom--Christ's Kingdom! How glad we are to know now that the Kingdom of God's dear Son is very different from these kingdoms, and that it is about to be inaugurated! And how necessary seems the Bible declaration that incident to the establishment of the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens is the great Time of Trouble, which already is beginning, and which the Bible indicates will end with anarchy and the utter destruction of the present order of society! Thank God that a new order will speedily take its place--symbolically called the new heavens and the new earth, wherein will dwell righteousness, and wherein wars will cease to the ends of the earth!--Psalm 46; 2 Peter 3:13.

PLAIN FOOD--NOT KING'S DAINITIES

Those inclined to think of the people of three thousand years ago as merely monkey men may take a lesson from today's Study. It not only shows great intelligence on the part of some of the youths taken prisoners from the land of Israel into the land of Babylon, but it also shows a breadth of wisdom in the Babylonian king. The fact that King Nebuchadnezzar selected young men from the captives to be especially trained in the Babylonian schools as the king's advisers and wise men shows us a breadth of thought that is equaled by very few of the monarchs of today. Would King George of Great Britain accept some young German captives and make special provision for them as counselors? Or would the Kaiser some young Britons and provide for them? Or would any of the other nations of the world today show as much breadth of mind as did Nebuchadnezzar 2,500 years ago?

Not only was this done, but young Jewish captives proving their qualifications were given every opportunity to use their talents for the benefit of the nation adopting them. Daniel became Prime Minister in Babylon; and others of the Jewish captives attained to the rank of presidents of different divisions of the Babylonian Empire. Surely this shows not only that in some of the Jews there was merit of a high order, but also that there was an ability to appreciate this and an absence of narrowness and jealousy hindering the best interests of the empire.

Today's Study introduces us to the time when four of

these Hebrew captives had been selected and been placed in Nebuchadnezzar's special school. This provision for them included not only their training, but also liberal provision for their physical welfare. They got a portion of the king's meat; that is, they shared in the food prepared for the royal family and supposed to be necessary for the development of the highest intelligence and ability.

Daniel and his three chums met the situation wisely. Under the Lord's blessing Daniel's meekness, gentleness and general nobility of character, derived from his knowledge of the true God, the faithful training of godly parents, and the knowledge of the Divine Law and promises, commended him at once to the loving favor of the chief eunuch. Thus the way was prepared for the favorable consideration of the proposition that these four young Hebrews would prefer to have plain food rather than the dainties and wines provided from the king's table.

The prince of the eunuchs hesitated to grant their request, believing that it would show unfavorably in the personal appearance of the Hebrews; and that this would be a reflection upon him and call for inquiry, and bring upon him the king's displeasure, and perhaps punishment. In reply to this, Daniel and his associates requested that the matter be tried out for ten days; and that if at the end of that time they seemed to be losing in flesh or otherwise inferior to the others, their request for a change of diet would be withdrawn; otherwise that they should be permitted to continue on the plain food.

Their request was that they be permitted to eat pulse. This, strictly speaking, seems to signify leguminous foods, such as beans, peas, etc.; but we surmise that the word is used in a general way to signify vegetables. The world is coming to recognize the fact that such leguminous foods as beans and peas contain the elements of nutrition generally sought for in flesh meats; and, more and more, flesh food is being discarded or limited and farinaceous and leguminous foods being substituted, and apparently in many cases to advantage in our day. We are not to think, however, that the Bible prohibits the use of flesh food. Christians are left to the exercise of their judgment and

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experience as respects what kind of food will best nourish their bodies and make them most useful in the Lord's service. That flesh meat is not to be despised nor considered sinful is abundantly proven by the fact that our Lord and the Apostles ate meat--lamb, fish, etc.

LOYALTY TO GOD AND TO PRINCIPLE

There is a special reason why Daniel and his fellows desired to be excused from eating of the king's portion. It was customary at that time to offer meat before idols before partaking of it--as though wishing to have some special blessing upon the meat. While such a blessing

would not really injure the meat--for an idol is nothing and could neither bless nor curse the meat--nevertheless, to eat such meat would more or less imply to the people that the young men were receiving blessings from the heathen gods, and that any wisdom or efficiency that they might have were thus derived. Doubtless this thought had much to do with the request for the change of the food.

Besides, although the Scriptures have not forbidden the use of alcoholic liquors, they do indicate special blessings upon those who abstain, as well as upon eunuchs.

Daniel and his fellows were apparently fully consecrated to the Lord; and their being away from home in a heathen land, instead of relaxing their religious interest, seems to have deepened it. More than ever they realized their need of a true God and desired to be His true servants.

How the Lord greatly blessed these young Hebrews in their resolution to live upright, clean lives in the midst of the heathen is a part of this lesson. At the close of the ten days of trial the four young Hebrews were found to be advantaged by the difference of diet; and the record is that eventually, when the king began to inquire of them, he found them ten times more wise than the magicians and astrologers of his realm. Nebuchadnezzar's wisdom was manifested in his exalting of these young men to high positions in his realm. It paid the young Hebrews well for all their self-denials and their loyalty to God and to principle.

We believe that there is a general operation of Divine Law to the effect that whoever seeks to live conscientiously, cleanly, purely, honestly, will have compensations in his own heart, in his own life, whether he also reaches positions of honor amongst men or not. The ideal condition, of course, is that of the true Christian, who is not merely a church member--not merely an attendant at church services--but whose entire will has been given to the Lord. To such an one, as the Apostle explains, "old things have passed away, and all things are become new." --2 Corinthians 5:17.

Such go to the Bible to learn therein the will of the Lord concerning them, and then to the best of their ability live in harmony with that will. It regulates them as respects what they eat, what they drink, where they go, what they do, what they read, what companionship they cultivate, and as respects even their very thoughts. With this class everything is subjected to the Divine will. Of all the people in the world these have the best ground for happiness and peace, having the promise not only of the life that now is, but also of glory, honor and immortality in the life to come as members of the glorified Church, sharers in its great work of blessing humanity during the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom.

A GOVERNOR'S VIEW OF TEMPERANCE:

"There is no denying that intoxicating liquors are indulged in by many respectable people; or that they are

associated, in some literature and in some society, with good fellowship and merry times; or that some persons can use them moderately without immediate apparent injury. But take my word for it, that the risk of their use is a terrible risk; that there can be just as good times and just as good fellowship without them; and that nobody thinks a bit the less of a young fellow because he will not use them; but, on the contrary, that every business man or professional man, whatever his own habits, instinctively turns away from employing any young man who has the taint of liquor about him.

"Every physician now condemns the use of alcohol as a drink. Every employer counts the use of it against an employee. If you want a clear head, if you want a sound heart, if you want a clean conscience, if you want a healthy body, if you want money in your pocket and credit to your name, put your foot right down and say that you are going to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors, and keep the faith. Is there anything nastier than a man under their influence? Be clean and wholesome. Keep your brain clear, your head steady, your self-respect firm, and you will have a life that is worth living. This is not a matter of goody talk and sentiment. If nothing else will convince you, experience will; but it will be that experience which can only come too late to be of any use. You may think that you have self-control enough to take care of yourself. But the chances are that your self-control will be no more than pasteboard against a Gatling gun if you tamper with temptation and once begin the indulgence of intoxicating liquors.

HOW RUSSELL SAGE COUNSELED

At a University Club meeting one of the members entertained his fellows with the following story:--

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"My first years in New York were not successful ones. I came down from the upper part of the State, determined to get along; but somehow, after a brief experience of city life, I became discouraged and lax. There were no positions but clerkships to be gotten, and to work my way up to the top from an army of young clerks, all as efficient as myself, seemed hopeless. At twenty-five, I was making only four dollars a week more than when I started; and I hadn't a cent to my credit in the bank.

"One day, scared and desperate about my future, I called to see Russell Sage. Sage came from my part of the country, and had known my father well. He listened to my narrative with interest. 'Do you drink?' he said.

"'Yes, sir, moderately,' said I; 'but only very moderately.'

"'Well, stop it for a year. Then come to see me again,' said Mr. Sage.

"I stopped drinking for a year; and at the end I paid my second visit to the millionaire. He remembered all

about me. He chatted a little while. Then he said, 'Do you gamble?'

"Yes,' I said; 'I sometimes gamble.'

"Well, give it up for a year; and then come to see me.'

"So I stopped gambling; and the year went by, and for the third time I appeared in Mr. Sage's office. 'Do you smoke?' he said, after we had had a third discussion of my affairs.

"Yes, sir,' said I.

"Stop smoking,' said he. 'Come back after you have stopped smoking for a year.'

The speaker laughed. One of his auditors said impatiently: "Well, when you went back what happened?"

"I never went back," was the reply, the speaker's eyes were twinkling humorously. "Because if I had, Mr. Sage would only have told me that now I had given up drinking, gambling and smoking, I must have saved enough money to start myself in business. It was true; I had saved enough money to start myself in business. That shrewd, wise man had set me, almost without my knowing it, on the road to success."

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GOD'S PITY FOR THE HEATHEN

--NOVEMBER 21.--JONAH 3:1-4:11.--

JONAH'S EXPERIENCE A TYPE OF OUR LORD'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION

--"GOD PREPARED A GREAT FISH"--DIVINE ABILITY
UNQUESTIONABLE--DIVINE PERMISSION OF EVIL LIMITED
--DIVINE COMPASSION ILLUSTRATED--HOW "GOD REPENTED
OF THE EVIL"--JONAH'S SELFISH SPIRIT REBUKED
--THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM THE HOPE OF THE WORLD.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations."--Matthew 28:19.

SKEPTICS have long been inclined to treat as a seaman's yarn the story of Jonah's experiences in the belly of the great fish.

Many pulpiteers even laugh at the account of Jonah's experiences as suitable only for the credulous, and not for wise Higher Critics. Nevertheless, the Great Teacher refers to Jonah and his experiences in the belly of the great fish; and those who believe the Scriptures will seek no better ground for their faith in the story than this.

Nor is Jonah's account without a considerable parallel. Some years ago one of the New York journals gave a detailed account, profusely illustrated, showing how a sailor was swallowed by a great sulphur whale, but escaped after several hours, his skin made purplish from the action of the digestive fluids of the whale's stomach.

So far as we know, Jonah's case was the only one in which any one spent parts of three days and nights in the belly of a fish. True, the throats of the majority of whales seem too small to admit a man. We remember, however, that they are quite elastic. The great sulphur variety is of enormous size and is said to have a throat capable of swallowing a skiff, which is much larger than a man.

Besides, the Bible description of the matter tells us specifically that God prepared a great fish. No one who has a proper appreciation of the powers of the Almighty would question for an instant the ability of God to prepare a special fish, either at the moment or, foreknowing Jonah's course, long in advance. The exceptional character of Jonah's experience constituted him a type of our Lord Jesus, who in death was swallowed up of the earth as was Jonah by the fish; and as our Lord was liberated from His prison-house, so was Jonah.--Matthew 12:39,40.

PREACHING TO THE NINEVITES

Today's Study, however, is connected with the Prophet Jonah's preaching to the Ninevites. Nineveh was a great city outside the pale of Judaism and therefore, at that time, outside the lines of Divine favor; for from the giving of the Law Covenant at Mount Sinai until three and a half years after the Cross, God's favors were exclusively confined to the nation of Israel, under the terms of the Law Covenant. At the close of Israel's period of exclusive favor, Cornelius the Centurion was the first Gentile to receive evidence of Divine favor.

In the cases of the Sodomites, the Ninevites and the Amalekites, Divine Justice decreed that their iniquity had come to the full; that for them to live longer would be unwise; and that for them to be cut off in death would not only hinder them from further degradation, but also furnish to mankind a general lesson, to the effect that there is a limit to the Divine permission of evil. The fact that these people were thus condemned and overthrown did not signify that they had ever enjoyed salvation or even an offer of salvation. Like all Adam's children, these people were under the sentence of death--"Dying, thou shalt die." They were merely cut off from further life under present conditions. Their opportunity for future life by resurrection was not interfered with, for neither they nor others had yet been redeemed.

Hence the future life, secured by the redemptive work of Jesus, was in no sense interfered with by the sentence of death issued against them en masse. Indeed, even the Jews were not saved. The offer of salvation made to them under the Law Covenant did not give them eternal life. As St. Paul declares, "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight." (Rom. 3:20.) If the Jews were justified by the Law, then Christ died in vain. The Law made nothing perfect.

The offer of life given to the Jew was merely to prove to him, and ultimately to all, the impossibility of any one's

obtaining life under the Divine Law without Divine assistance --without the Savior and His work at Calvary and, additionally, His work for the world as the Mediator of the New Covenant, during His Messianic Reign of a thousand years. In harmony with this the Apostle declares, "Christ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." And again, "There is none other name under Heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." And again, "This great salvation began to be preached by our Lord and was confirmed by those who heard Him."--2 Timothy 1:10; Acts 4:12; Hebrews 2:3.

THE NINEVITES REPENTED

Jonah's preaching was that within forty days God would destroy Nineveh. But the people, impressed by his message, repented of their sinful course and sought Divine forgiveness. The king's proclamation was that "neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, nor drink water; but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God; yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands." The Lord hearkened to the Ninevites, accepted their repentance, and permitted their national life to continue for a time.

We are, of course, to understand that God knew the end from the beginning--that He knew that the Ninevites would repent, and that He would not blot them out within forty days, in accordance with the Prophet Jonah's preaching. Nineveh did pass away utterly, great city as it was, but not within forty literal days. Possibly the time meant by the Almighty was what is sometimes termed prophetic or symbolical time--a day for a year; 40 days, 40 years.

The lesson shows us how much greater is the compassion of the Almighty than that of His imperfect servants of human kind. God was pleased to have the Ninevites turn from their sins to hearty repentance. He was pleased to grant them an extension of earthly life. But Jonah was displeased. His argument was, "There! God has made a fool of me. He told me that this great city would be destroyed within forty days; and I preached it. God has brought discredit upon me, and I am now to be regarded as a false prophet."

Jonah was more interested in himself and his own reputation than in the Ninevites and their interests. The servants of the Lord must not be so. Self should be lost sight of. As the great Apostle Paul advises, "Love seeketh not her own"; and again, "Even Christ pleased not Himself."--1 Corinthians 13:5; Romans 15:3.

"GOD REPENTED OF THE EVIL"

In some minds the query arises, How can God repent and change His mind if He knows the end from the beginning? The answer is that the word repent has a wider meaning than is generally appreciated. Humanity

uses it only in respect to a change of purpose. But, as modern dictionaries show, the word may mean either a

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change of action or a change of purpose, or both. God's purposes do not change. He never repents of them. But He does change His conduct.

Thus Israel, for centuries His favored people, were cut off; and God's dealing toward them changed. But His purposes never changed. He had foreknown and had foretold their rejection of Jesus and His rejection of them, and also had foreseen that later on they would be regathered to their own land and would be forgiven and blessed by Messiah, when He assumed His Messianic Office as King of kings and Lord of lords--"The Prince of the kings of this earth."--Revelation 1:5.

The Lord taught the Prophet Jonah a lesson respecting his sympathy for a gourd, an inanimate thing, and his lack of sympathy for the Ninevites. So it is with many preachers and others. They have sympathy for the flowers, for the birds, for the lower animals, for children and, to some extent, for all mankind under the distresses of the present time. Nevertheless, such people sometimes become angry at the bare suggestion that God does not purpose to roast the Ninevites, the Sodomites, the Amalekites, or anybody else to all eternity; and that His gracious purposes for the world in general will be manifested in giving all an opportunity to attain unto human perfection, a world-wide Eden and everlasting life, if they will hear and obey the great Messiah, whose Head is Jesus and whose members, the elect Church, have been in process of preparation throughout this Gospel Age.

Our Lord declared that the Gospel was to be preached no longer to the Jews only, but to all nations. (Luke 24:45-48; Acts 1:8.) The preaching was not intended to convert all nations, and has not done so. It was intended to gather a saintly few from all nations; and this it will soon have accomplished.--Acts 15:14-18.

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INTERESTING LETTERS

"AS UNORTHODOX AS THE SAVIOR HIMSELF"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

As I years ago had my name struck off the membership roll of Christ Church (Anglican), Chatham, Ontario, because I no longer believed its teachings and thought it not honest to be longer identified with that body, so, now, I desire my name to be enrolled as a joyful follower in the footsteps of Our Lord Jesus Christ--"in the Lamb's Book of Life."

From the time of severing my old connection up to a few months ago I was in darkness. I knew that in the Lord's good time and in His own good way all would be well with His world; but all of the alleged churches with their God-dishonoring and antagonistic doctrines repelled me. A well-known preacher of Macleod, Alta., sneeringly suggested that I would better start a church of my own so as to have one to suit me. I told him I did not think that would be necessary, but that if I ever found any body of Christians whose belief I could hold in my heart and soul, and not only with my lips, I would assuredly apply for membership in that body even though they were as "unorthodox" as the Savior Himself. And here I am!

Since receiving a copy of THE WATCH TOWER with "Where Are the Dead," etc., in February last, I have read five and a half of your six books of SCRIPTURE STUDIES, then--with them at hand--I read the Bible through in a new and marvelously clearer light for which, after God, I thank you. Many of your Bible Students Monthlies also I have read--and, as you may imagine, very little else. Beyond the merest scanning of the daily paper, I have no time from my belated study of God's Word to devote to other reading.

In this world's goods I am a poor man, but I am richer with the glorious knowledge of God's Word that has come to me than I ever hoped to be rich. As I told an acquaintance recently, I would not if I could trade the knowledge of the Truth that I have received in the past few months for all the money in the world. And, as the dear man had recently buried his wife, I passed on to him "Where Are the Dead?"

My wife, I regret to say, is not a believer. I would not class her as an "unbeliever," but she is stronger for the so-called orthodox and accepted faith than for a personal faith based upon a personal searching of the Scriptures. The friction, however, will undoubtedly work out for the best. Her health is poor, and I spend every possible moment at home, but studying the Word of Truth.

Several of the brethren here I know, and though there is no doubt that my "godfathers and my godmothers" did their best for me in infancy, according to their light, yet I propose to arrange to be baptized.

I trust that you will pardon the unseemly length of this letter, which has really grown far beyond my intention, beyond your time, but not, I hope, beyond your forbearance.

Your loving brother in the Lord, ROBT. S. SMYTH.

"THE LIGHT THAT IS IN THEE"

Question.--Please explain the statement, "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Answer.--Apparently our translators have failed to get the Master's thought; hence the bungling statement troubles the English reader. Manifestly it is absurd to say that a light in a person is darkness. If it is light it cannot be darkness; if it is darkness it cannot be light.

In Volume V., STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, we have endeavored to give the correct thought without taking time for discussion. On page 264 we render it thus: "If the light that is in thee become darkness [be extinguished], how great is that darkness." Evidently the darkness would be greater to the person who had once had the light and who had lost it than to the person who had never had it.

In Volume V., STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, page 294, we quote the passage, "If the light that is in thee be [become] darkness, how great is that darkness." The paraphrasing here is still different, but gives exactly the same thought, that light was once enjoyed and darkness displaced it.

A very good translation of the entire passage reads: "The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is unclouded your whole body will be lighted up; but if your eye is diseased your whole body will be dark. And if the inner light become darkness, how intense must that darkness be!"

Our Lord was showing the importance of a proper spiritual sight, in order to discern Truth clearly. Originally man had a clear eye, mental as well as physical. By reason of sin his discernment of right and wrong has been more or less blurred, and some are totally blind to the deeper and spiritual things. As St. Paul says, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all who believe not." (2 Corinthians 4:4.) Again St. Paul prays for the Church, "I pray God for you,...that the eyes of your understanding opening, ye may be able to comprehend what is the hope of His calling," etc. (Ephesians 1:15-18.) This is the same thought which our Lord sets forth. Whether the darkness is that which came by the fall of the natural man or whether it be a darkness which comes upon the Christian after having been once enlightened--either way--the darkness is the greater by reason of whatever light we once enjoyed.

The Bible uses the figure of the Church as the Body of Christ--its members His members. St. Paul suggests that the eye, ear, tongue, etc., which belong to the head, are special gifts for the Church. Thus the Lord has set in the Body the various members. He mentions the eye as one of these. A lesson is suggested in connection with the Lord's Word that in proportion as the Lord's people at any time have clearness of understanding of the Divine Truth it would be because the eye members would be blessed of the Lord with clearness of vision and opportunity to assist the entire Body.

WHAT IS ADAM'S CONDITION?

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

It is over twenty-three years since the Lord opened my eyes to see the beauties of the great Plan of Salvation, and each year of that period has surpassed the preceding one in the preciousness of the Truth of God.

During that time every experience has emphasized the fact that our understanding of the Divine purpose is irrefutably

correct, and I write to tell you of a little conversation between one of the Brethren and a gentleman who takes a leading part in Sunday School work in his neighborhood, which well illustrates the confusion of those who follow the creeds of men instead of the Word of God.

They were discussing the state of the dead, the denominationalist

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arguing that at the moment of death everyone went either to a heaven of bliss or to a hell of torment, while our Brother insisted that the Bible taught the dead were dead until the time for the awakening at the Second Coming of Christ.

Brother W. said, "Now there was Adam, where do you suppose he went at the time of his death?"

Mr. A. replied, "Adam did not do anything very heinous, and even after he was driven out of the Garden of Eden he seemed to long for fellowship with God; so I presume he went to heaven when he died."

The Brother said, "But look here, Adam was the one who got all the rest of us in trouble by his disobedience. As St. Paul says, 'By the disobedience of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation,' and according to your view this means that Adam's sin was the thing which started millions of the race on the road which will terminate in an eternity of torture; and yet Adam, the one who helped to send them there, is to go to heaven."

Mr. A. said, "That is so, isn't it? I never thought of that before. Surely Adam could not go to heaven after that. My statement was incorrect; Adam must have gone to hell when he died."

Brother W. said, "But see what that involves you in. Adam merely ate some forbidden fruit, and all have done as bad things as that. So if God sentenced Adam to such an awful eternity for such a little thing, what hope can the rest of us have?"

The gentleman answered this with, "That's so, that's so. My first answer was right, Adam surely went to heaven."

Our Brother replied, "If that is true then it involves you in a greater absurdity than before. Had Adam been obedient he would have dwelt forever in that perfect Paradise, the Garden of Eden, but now he had disobeyed and must die, and in consequence of his sin he was to get something far better than he ever would have had by obedience."

Our friend in his confusion tried to correct himself again saying, "That couldn't be; that would be inconsistent; Adam must have gone to hell--that's the correct thought."

Again our Brother had his turn: "But see what this leads to. Thousands of years ago Adam sinned and died, while today men are passing into death who have had far more of the spirit of rebellion in their hearts than Adam ever had; and yet they will have thousands of years less of infernal agony than Adam, who committed such a little sin in comparison. Would that be justice?"

Mr. A. said, "You've got me all confused. I do not know

where I'm at, and I don't know where Adam's at either."

How well this brings home to our hearts the fact that while the Truth is "clear as crystal," the error is "clear as mud"! I do not like to use an undignified expression like the last, but it takes an undignified statement to describe an undignified system of doctrine. Thanks be to the Lord who has lifted our feet out of the mud and placed them upon the Rock!

With many prayers that the Heavenly Father will continue to use you to His glory to the very end of your course, I remain,

In much Christian love, B. H. BARTON.

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HOLIDAY REMEMBRANCERS

A LIST of our stock, suitable for Holiday Gifts, we are publishing a little earlier than usual this year. This will give those living at a distance ample time to forward their orders to us and have them filled in good season--before the rush and congestion of the mails during the weeks immediately preceding Christmas. This will be a convenience to us as well. Those living near by would also do well to send their orders early.

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NOVEMBER ITINERARY

Pastor Russell has arranged to visit the following Classes and to give Public addresses at the places and times named. Additionally he expects to address the Bible Students at each place less publicly. In many of the places arrangements have been made for two and three-day conventions:

Montreal, Que., Nov. 21.
3:00 P.M., His Majesty's Theatre, Guy St.
Watertown, N.Y., Nov. 22
8:00 P.M., City Opera House, Arsenal St.
Orillia, Ont., Nov. 24.
7:30 P.M., Orillia Auditorium.
Galt, Ont., Nov. 25.
7:30 P.M., Scott's Opera House.
Port Huron, Mich., Nov. 26.
7:30 P.M., Masonic Temple.
Pontiac, Mich., Nov. 27.
7:30 P.M., The Armory.
Grand Rapids, Mich., Nov. 28.
3:00 P.M., Powers' Theatre, Pearl St., N.W.
Jackson, Mich., Nov. 28.
8:00 P.M., Masonic Temple, Cortland St.
Jamestown, N.Y., Nov. 29.
7:30 P.M., Samuels' Opera House, E. Second St.

Commencing with the next issue Brother Russell's appointments will be shown on the last page of THE WATCH TOWER.

"POEMS OF DAWN"

In our issue of Nov. 1, page 334, re new "Poems of Dawn," we neglected to mention that it has both an alphabetical index and a topical index. This is a feature which, we understand, some of the friends missed in our former edition.

The prices quoted are very low, permitting the books to be freely used as Christmas tokens. We can imagine very few Christmas gifts more appropriate. The book contains beautiful poetry suited to nearly every condition of the

Christian's life.

SPECIAL PUBLIC PILGRIM MEETINGS

We are well aware that the Bible Students' classes do not represent a large amount of wealth, and hence, that their means for advancing the Truth are to that extent circumscribed. Nothing below is intended to urge any class to do more than its judgment and opportunities will reasonably permit it to do.

The success of the one-day conventions in conjunction with the public address by the Editor of THE WATCH TOWER leads us to the thought that possibly similarly good results might be obtained in conjunction with public lectures by others of the Pilgrim brethren. We had in mind, therefore, selecting from the Pilgrim staff several brethren of special ability for interesting the public, and employing these for special meetings at places where the friends desire and can provide for public meetings.

Only first-class auditoriums of good reputation should be thought of. Rinks, casinos and coliseums are generally unsatisfactory. They do well enough for political gatherings and other public functions where it is not necessary for every word to be heard; but for the presentation of the Truth, opera houses, theatres, etc., are usually much to be preferred. Large audiences and good houses are obtainable any night in the week if intelligently sought.

Whenever the class has a good auditorium, not higher up than the second floor, the follow-up meeting should be held on the following Sunday by one of the local brethren, if competent. The topic for that meeting might well be "The Second Coming of Christ--How? When? Why?"

Classes desiring such special public services will please notify THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY, Care Pilgrim Department.

I. B. S. A. BEREAN BIBLE STUDIES FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER Questions from Manual on Series Third of "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES" STUDY II.

Week of December 5..Q. 21 to 27 Week of December 19..Q. 35 to 42
Week of December 12..Q. 28 to 34 Week of December 26..Q. 43 to 50

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

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE SIN OF THE CHURCH

BY RT. REV. CHARLES D. WILLIAMS
(PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL BISHOP OF MICHIGAN.)

IT IS an appalling thought that the Church should have had a part in the crime of Calvary, and yet it did, and that the chief part. It is really the villain of the plot.

What was the sin of the Church that crucified Christ? Or, to put it another way, what are the characteristics of a perverted religion? They are chiefly two:

1. The ecclesiastical mind.
2. The ecclesiastical conscience.

The ecclesiastical mind is a closed mind--and there is nothing it resents so much as being pried open to receive a new idea. Its settled rule of judgment, its accepted test of truth, is "What is new is never true and what is true is never new." Philip Gilbert Hammerton has aptly compared the conventional process of religious instruction and training to the process of etching on glass. The mind of the pupil is first covered with an impervious coat of pious prejudice. The pattern of the desired creed is then carefully traced with the stylus of authority; and then only is the mind exposed to the sand-blast of reality and the acid test of experience, which cut along the exposed lines only and the desired creed is indelibly engraved upon the mind.

The other characteristic of a perverted religion is the ecclesiastical conscience. It is strikingly illustrated by one Good Friday scene. A procession is sweeping through the streets of Jerusalem, bound for the Governor's Palace. Who compose this procession? They are the religious leaders of the people, the prominent divines, the chief ecclesiastics, the dignitaries and prelates of the Church, and the Sanhedrin, the chief religious legislative body of the nation. It is as if you rolled into one the Presbyterian General Assembly, the Methodist General Conference, the Episcopal General Convention, the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, and the House of Lords, with the whole Bench of Bishops.

What is the business they have in mind? They are intent on committing the greatest crime in history--a crime at which the whole world has shuddered ever since. They would crucify the Son of God. But at Pilate's threshold they stop. Why? Ah, they have stumbled across a statute with a penalty, a canon of the Church with a sanction. And these people have great respect for penalties and sanctions, if they have little for truth and righteousness. If they should enter a heathen house that Passover morning, they would become ceremonially defiled and unfit to partake of the sacrament. They would lose their reputation for strict churchmanship.

They are indefinitely scrupulous and utterly unprincipled, entirely sincere and yet completely untruthful and unrighteous, pious and perverted.

The "ecclesiastical conscience" holds the precept so near the eye that it hides the principle; it substitutes petty, thumb-nail rules for the fundamental law of righteousness. It makes religiousness a substitute for righteousness instead of a means thereto. It puts technical priests and properties in the place of character. It makes churchmanship do for religion and "churchianity" for "Christianity."

And the ecclesiastical conscience is not confined to the Church. The lawyer who makes a legality his test instead of justice; the merchant who is satisfied simply to conform to the code of his trade, whose excuse for any dishonesty is, "They all do it"; the "gentleman" or "lady" who puts good form and manners in the place of sincerity and kindliness of heart, and politeness in place of courtesy --all are alike animated by the ecclesiastical conscience.

It was this ecclesiastical mind and this ecclesiastical conscience which crucified Jesus Christ.

MARCHING TO UNIVERSAL SLAUGHTER-HOUSE

Again we quote for the benefit of our readers, truthful words from an editorial of the New York American, as follows:

"We are living today in a time more trying to the souls of men than any period of the world's history. We are witnessing, in the war which involves every continent of the earth in the direct conflict of arms, a visitation of horror and destruction greater than the human race has ever suffered before. From North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australasia, from every corner of the earth and every clime, human beings are marching to the universal slaughter-house.

"In one year of this fearful struggle billions of property has been destroyed, and the bloody combatants already claim to have murdered or maimed more than four million human beings. This is all in one year, and no decision is yet in sight. Neither side has yet won a decisive advantage.

"The military experts believe that the war has only just begun. Lord Kitchener, head of the British forces, declared, even before the Russian defeats, that it would

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take three years to reduce the Teutonic allies and the Turks, while the disinterested military experts are doubtful if the Central Empires can ever be conquered.

"The French, the British, the Russians and the Italians are waiting until their factories, and our own American factories, can equip their armies with guns and ammunition which they need in order to bring to

bear their greatest power for destruction. If four million men have gone in one year in which the side that is stronger in numbers has not yet brought its full strength to bear, what will be the wastage in human life if they fight it out to a finish?

"We Americans are neutral. But are we not interested?"

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Are we not involved in this fearful struggle?

Are we not involved in it as a part of the human family, as members of the white race, as participants in the Western civilization, all of which are threatened by a prolongation of this dreadful carnage?

"If this war is fought out to a finish, shall we not suffer morally and materially, whichever side wins? If the allies are the conquerors and the German people are overwhelmingly beaten and broken, shall we not, as part of the world, suffer an irretrievable loss? Germany's wonderful contributions to the world of science and industry and commerce are known to all business men. But, great as they are, her contributions to governmental efficiency, to the ability of society acting as a social unit to perform wonders for the benefit of her people beyond even the dreams of individuals, have scarcely yet been recognized. She is making a contribution to socialistic experiments greater than was ever known to any people before. Her national Government owns its railroads, its telephone and telegraph companies. Her great cities own their waterworks, their gas and electric light companies and their street railways. They build wharves and docks and they plant forests and they develop land, not by individual initiative, but as a governmental function. They, first among the nations, began to free their workingmen from industrial slavery by old age pensions, workingmen's compensation laws and rigid safety appliance laws and inspections. They first devised the means of freeing the farmers from financial peonage by rural credits through which the farmer could borrow money from the State to improve his farm. They are showing the world what the people in their organized capacity can do and how prosperous they can make themselves, even though crowded within the confines of a not too favorable territory. We Americans are every day copying something from the German socialistic experiments. Can we see them crushed without immeasurable loss to ourselves?"

"If, on the other hand, the Allies should be crushed, it would involve the destruction of France and of a historically great people whose contribution to human liberty and to the economic freedom of the world John Stuart Mill, the distinguished political economist, has declared greater than that of any other, even including our own.

"Would it benefit the world to see the spirit of England broken and her commercial and industrial efficiency impaired and her purchasing power destroyed? There never was a time in the last twenty-five years when, if

England could no longer buy from us, we would not have faced a financial crisis. We do not forget the great enterprises and the great industrial developments in America which English capital has financed. We cannot forget that most of the elementary principles of liberty which we call our own had their birth and first development in Great Britain."

* * *

When, after reading the above editorial, we call to mind that the Lord in the Bible has foretold the direst things foreboded in the editorial, and much more--even to anarchy and the entire destruction of the present order of things--we might well weep. God has kindly veiled the eyes of humanity that they do not see the coming storm in all its dread severity; because they have no eyes of faith to see the resulting blessings as we see them.

How glad we are to know that ours is a God of love --to know that the millions that are dying in frenzied strife are not going to eternal torture, but in due time they shall share in the general blessings of the world which Messiah's Kingdom will accomplish. Can we wonder then that our Master left the message, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads and rejoice; knowing that your deliverance draweth nigh"?--Luke 21:28.

If the deliverance of the Church meant eternal suffering to the non-elect, how could we rejoice in it? But as our eyes of understanding are opening, we see with astonished wonder the lengths and the breadths, the heights and the depths of the great Creator's love and mercy. We perceive that the glorification of the Church means the blessing of all then alive by the inauguration of the reign of righteousness and peace, and by the breaking of the shackles of sin and ignorance, and by the binding of Satan for a thousand years. And oh, so much more, the release of the thousands of millions of heathens who, for the past six thousand years, have been going down into the great prison-house of death--the Bible hell--the tomb! With this rosy view of the future, which the Bible so surely gives, darkness and clouds, sorrows and tears for the immediate present cannot daunt us. Our souls do magnify the Lord! We sing daily, hourly, the new song, "True and righteous are Thy judgments, O Lord God Almighty! Who shall not come and worship before Thee, when all Thy righteous dealings shall be made manifest?"--Revelation 15:3,4; 16:7.

THE SECRET PLACE

Wondrous the thought--that the Father
Knows of our every care;
Feels for us when the shadow

Lurks where the sky was fair:
Knows of the pent-up sorrow,
Feels for the eyes that weep;
Tells of a brighter Morrow
Where shadows never creep!

Precious to know the Good Shepherd
Tenderly guides His sheep
Over the stony places;
Cares when the path is steep:
Watches for greenest pastures,
Tends them with loving skill;
Guards them from fright and danger,
Leads them by Waters still!

Joyous the thought--that the angels,
Guardians are, to keep;
Bearing in hands so tender
Weary and wounded Feet
Daily are gaining access
To the dear Father's face;
Hourly are seeking succor
For those who crave His grace!

Blessed to feel we are dwelling
Safe in the Secret Place;
Under Jehovah's shadow,
Trusting till we can trace:
Knowing no ill can harm us,
Knowing His Arm of Love
Safely will shield, till He calls us
Unto His Home above!

--MARY CLEVELAND JEWELL.

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WHY GOD HAS PERMITTED SATAN'S LYING DECEPTIONS

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

GOD'S children realize that this text is to them full of deep significance and import. It can scarcely be considered too often or be too strongly emphasized. The word prove has the sense of test, demonstrate. The words were addressed to Israel, God's chosen people who had entered into a special Covenant with Him, agreeing to be His people, set apart from the heathen nations by whom they were surrounded, to be a holy nation, Jehovah's peculiar treasure; and He had agreed to be their God. As they had promised to obey

all God's requirements, so it was proper that the Lord should prove them. He did not prove the heathen nations; for they had made no covenant with Him and were not in relationship to Him as His servants. But Israel must be proved. The character of their testing is shown in the context. This proving would be accomplished by permitting false teachers, false prophets, to be amongst them.

We are to remember that the word prophet, in its broadest signification, means one who teaches, as well as one who foretells. The Lord permitted some to be among the Israelites who would declare things designed to mislead them into the worship of other gods. This would not be because God could not have stricken down the false teachers, but it was permitted as a test to the people who professed to be consecrated to the service of the true God, Jehovah. These false prophets were able to give signs or demonstrations to convince of their miraculous power. But Israel was warned of God to give heed to no prophet whose teachings and works would tend to lead them away from Jehovah and His service. Such signs and wonders are still frequent accompaniments of the heathen religions, which are inspired by Satan and his demon hosts.

Since all that happened to fleshly Israel was for our

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admonition (1 Corinthians 10:11), our text has a very forceful application to Spiritual Israel. "The Prince of demons" and his hosts of fallen spirits have great wonder-working powers, as well as considerable ability to foretell future events, sometimes with marvelous accuracy. The fallen angels possess much knowledge of earthly affairs, with power to read the mind as well. This has been true throughout the past.

One of the tests that spirit-mediums formerly used was to tell of the death of some one before it had become known. They would tell, for instance, of the death of some notable. They might declare, "The king of Sweden died today." There would be no means of verifying this information until some ship would come over; for in those days, before the invention of the telegraph and cable, news traveled very slowly. But in a month or two the news would come, and it would prove to be true as foretold by the medium. It would sometimes be found that he had died at the very hour that the medium had declared. Mediums can do less along this line today because of modern inventions for the rapid transmission of news throughout the world; but they have many other means of ascertaining facts and communicating them.

GOD'S WORD HIS PEOPLE'S GUIDE

We are not informed regarding the power used by the fallen angels in their miracle working and cures, but we know that it is not from God. It is for the Lord's children

to remember that He has given us His Word, and that He reveals Himself through this Word. It is sufficient that He warns us against having anything to do with these occult powers. Examples of such warnings are found in the following Scriptures: Leviticus 19:31; 20:6,27; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; 2 Kings 17:17; 23:24; 1 Chronicles 10:13; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Isaiah 8:19; Jeremiah 27:9,10; 29:8,9; Luke 8:26-35; Acts 16:16-18.

We are to search the Scriptures and thus to learn about God and His great Plan, and we are not to permit any of these false prophets to lead us away from Him or to have any influence over us. The Lord permits this evil influence to be in the world. Why? Because He is now selecting the Bride for His Son, and He wishes the members of this class to be tested. Only by permitting false teachers could He demonstrate to Himself and to the angels to what extent His professed people are loyal to Him, and whether they will follow false doctrines and false teachers. The Lord will have only those to be of the Very Elect who will obey Him and will trust Him even where they cannot trace Him; so long as they have His Word, His Testimony, it should be sufficient.

The tendency of all these false teachers is to lead away from the one true God to the worship of demons. There are a great many gods, even in America. When a Brahmin comes to this country to live, he just as truly worships Brahma here as in India. Theosophists also make their images or idols to take the place of the true God. Because of greater civilization the false gods are not always of clay or bronze or wood. But today the idol images are often made with printer's ink. The gods that the heathen of civilized countries worship are very different from the God of the Bible.

There are very many today in civilized countries who do not worship the true God. Some have an abstract idea of a principle of right, and this principle is their god. They have also an idea of a principle of evil or wrong, and this evil principle is to them the Devil, and is the only devil they recognize. These people are seeking to do right, but they are deluded.

There are more and more of these false gods coming up in these days. There is the New Thought god. We believe that these new, unscriptural theories and ideas are from the demons, who are gaining greater power to deceive at this time. We do not know that the false teachings of the past were recognized as false by those teaching them--their promoters were probably not aware that they were false teachers. And so it is today. The teachers of false doctrines, the leaders of all these cults, ancient and modern, which deny or make void the Scriptures, are deceived. The evil spirits are responsible for much of the confusion and difficulty in which the world is today.

The Apostle Paul, in referring to the close of this Gospel Age, declares that false doctrines will be multiplied. He tells us why many will be misled and deceived. He says, "They received not the love of the Truth, that

they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie [Genesis 3:4]: that they all might be condemned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.) The intimation here seems to be that those who have come into touch with God and with His Truth will be so attracted by the Truth that it will be like the needle attracted to the pole. God is the great Pole. Those really drawn to Him will be difficult to swerve. Although a magnetic needle may be temporarily diverted from the pole, yet it will surely swing back and point in the right direction. And so it

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is with God's true people. They have an affinity for the Truth, they are influenced by it, magnetized by it, drawn.

These receive the Truth in the love of it--not in the love of building up a denomination, not in the love of soliciting money for a denomination, not in the love of certain ideas of their own, but in the love of the Truth itself. The Lord will not permit those who receive the Truth in the love of it to be turned aside. But He will send strong delusions to those who receive it from any other motive or for any other reason. These strong delusions He will permit to be spread abroad because He purposes to demonstrate the real heart attitude of each of those who have named His name and taken His vows upon them. Thus the loyal-hearted ones will be made manifest, and of them He declares, "They shall be Mine, ...in that Day when I make up My jewels."--Mal. 3:17.

FALLEN SPIRITS ESPECIALLY ACTIVE TODAY

The fallen spirits have been very successful throughout the entire world in deluding and ensnaring humanity. The Lord advises His people that these spirits will be especially active and especially seductive in their methods of attack in the Harvest of this present Age. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, [through] giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy." (1 Timothy 4:1,2.) We are forewarned that this "hypocrisy" on the part of the seducing spirits consists of personating "angels of light" (2 Corinthians 11:13,14), and pretending to bring in "new light."

Amongst barbarians there is no reason why the spirits should try to bring new light; for these are asleep and already under the power of delusion and false doctrines. But amongst the enlightened and civilized, thought and investigation are being aroused in this the beginning of the great Day of the Lord. Despite the blinding influences of Satan and the hosts of fallen spirits many of these are awakening, and it is here that Satan is kept busy.

Amongst mankind today the old time necromancy and incantations will not do; their intellects are too alert to

be much or long hoodwinked by these things. Even the deceptions of Spiritism in its manifestations of superhuman powers through tipping, writing, spirit-photography, voices, etc., all for the purpose of proving human immortality and the ability of the dead to commune with those on earth, are too gross and foolish to deceive and captivate a large proportion of intelligent people, and especially God's consecrated ones, the very class Satan is most anxious to stumble. Consequently there are changes in progress--new "garments of light" are assumed continually; and every feature of Present Truth sent by God as "meat in due season" for His saints is promptly counterfeited to "deceive if possible the Very Elect."

But it is not possible to deceive and lead away those whose faith in God, through Christ, is fixed, who are trusting in the merit of Christ's great redeeming sacrifice, and whose hearts are wholly consecrated to the Lord and His service. Such shall "never fall"; but all others are to be separated from the faithful. God so uses Satan's wrath in the outworking of His plans that He may be said to send the strong delusions which are now misleading all whose faith is not securely founded on the Rock Christ Jesus, who have not put on the "whole armor of God," supplied in His Word. Those who are attracted by error and take pleasure in it are thus being manifested, and their condemnation as unfit for a share in the Heavenly Kingdom will be demonstrated as just and holy and righteous altogether.

DELUSIONS OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THEOSOPHY

Among the popular and more refined devices of the great Adversary, and all the powers of darkness, are Christian Science and Theosophy. These on the outside, together with the evolutionary and anti-Biblical theories on the inside, called Higher Criticism, advanced thought, etc., are rapidly tearing to shreds all of Truth that the poor nominal systems ever had. These theories all bear the distinctive marks of the "father of lies." (John 8:44.) They all with one consent declare man to be immortal. Higher Critics regard as "old wives' fables" much of the Word of God, including the record of miracles, the story of Adam and Eve and their fall in Eden, the story of Jonah and the great fish, etc.

The name "Christian Science" is a misnomer for the tenets of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy. Her teachings are devoid of scientific elements, and the word "Christian" attached as part of the name given her theories is only calculated by Satan to deceive and destroy God's people. To Christian Scientists Christ is not a Savior, nor was a

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Savior needed. Christ was only a good man, a Christian Scientist, who but imperfectly understood the new science which He introduced, but which in these latter times has

been perfectly and fully set forth by the late Mrs. Eddy, of Boston. It has for its trademark, so to speak, "All is life; there is no death!" Thus they declare Satan's old falsehood started in Eden, "Ye shall not surely die." Jesus declared that Satan "was a liar from the beginning and abode not in the truth," not from his own beginning, but from man's beginning.

The various shades of Universalism unite in the same conclusion--Christ did not die to ransom man from the power of the grave, as the Scriptures declare. He was only a man like other men, a good and wise Teacher, but not a Savior in any substitutionary sense, they assert. Some hold that man evolved from an ape or a tadpole or from protoplasm; that he was a very bad likeness and not at all an image of God; that he was like a "half-baked cake." But all unite in the belief that mankind are being gradually evolved to perfection. All assure us in Satan's very language, "Ye shall not surely die!"--death is only a process of evolution; man is his own savior.

Then we have Theosophy--a theory appealing to a goodly number of the cultured and aesthetic who are of the blind, naked and hungry in the nominal churches. (Rev. 3:17.) It comes forward as one of the newest and most polished forms of religious thought. But those versed in ancient history know that in its very essence it is a revival of the central thought of Hindooism, and in many particulars of the delusions of the so-called "German Mystics" of medieval times. Theosophy holds that "all things are of God" in the absolute and ridiculous sense. It holds that all finite existences were effluxed or thrown off from one Infinite Being; that these effluxed beings--angels, men, beasts, birds and devils--being portions of Deity, are immortal, and (as Satan has always taught) "shall not surely die."

In harmony with the philosophy of Socrates and Plato (while denying these as the authors or even the burnishers of their doctrine, and claiming that these Greek philosophers got their information, as they now get it, direct from God by communion and intuition), Theosophy claims not only that man will live forever future, but that he has lived forever past. It appeals to the weak-minded with the question, "Have you never seen places that seemed strangely familiar the first time you visited them? Those were places you had seen before your present existence began." And, as of old, Satan may

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sometimes assist a sluggish imagination with a dream. Theosophy holds that death is not death, but a new birth; and that each individual will be reborn again and again until he has developed sufficiently the Divine nature; and that then he will be reabsorbed into God for eternity.

MAN'S WISDOM IS FOOLISHNESS WITH GOD

Theosophy professes to be based upon neither theology nor philosophy. The word Theosophy is defined by its advocates to mean the Religion of Wisdom. They claim that its wisdom is Divine, resulting from direct intuition and communion with God. Consequently they reject philosophical reasoning, and revelation such as the Scriptures, as hindrances to true wisdom. They have substituted for the Revelation of God the vain imaginings of their own imperfect minds--holy meditations. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools," was written by Divine authority of a similar class.--Romans 1:21,22.

Theosophy rejects all revealed religion, ignores all doctrines and claims to be the religion of cause and effect --that sooner or later wrong-doing will react upon the wrong-doer, bringing its penalty; and right-doing will bring its reward. It places Christ and Moses on a parity with Socrates, Plato, Confucius and Mohammed as world-teachers. It is ready to quote from the Bible or from the Koran any fragment that can be turned to account in its own support, but does not regard any book or man as especially inspired authority. It professes to be the patron of every noble trait and every benevolent design, and is willing to class as Theosophists all popular people. It favors alms-giving and good deeds, so done as to be seen of men.

Therefore Theosophy is, as it claims to be, preeminently suited to the sentiments of the majority of the wise children of this world, who do not appreciate either their own imperfection or God's mercy in Christ. They say, "I want no one to pay my debts for me. I expect to pay for myself the penalty of my sins--if I commit any." All holding such sentiments are ripe for Theosophy. Indeed, the entire "Christian world" is ready to leave its former confused creed-mooring, and to set sail, with Theosophy for pilot and good works for motive power, to reach a haven of rest and happiness--if there be such a haven; for many of them doubt it. Alas! how ignorance of God's Word and Plan and how the confusion of the nominal churches have paved the way for this great falling away from the cross of Christ to "another gospel," which is really no Gospel.--Galatians 1:6-9.

Of course none of these delusions has any use for the doctrine of the cross of Christ--the "Ransom for all"--or its testimony "in due time," now or hereafter. See 1 Timothy 2:4-6. The Apostle here declares that God our Savior "will have all men to be saved [from the Adamic death now holding sway over the whole world], and to come to the knowledge of the Truth; for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." But no, the Bible doctrine of a Ransom past and of a consequent Restitution in the future (Acts 3:19-23) finds no place in any of these theories.

SATAN'S LIE THE BASIS OF FALSE DOCTRINES

These foretold "strong delusions" of our day are none of them actually strong or powerful. On the contrary, they are very weak. But they have great power to delude many because a large proportion of professed Christians of our day have never become real disciples of Christ, but are merely "tares," imitation Christians. Among those who are real Christians, few are "weaned from the milk." (Isaiah 28:9; Hebrews 5:12-14.) Few Christians in the nominal church are mentally or spiritually out of their swaddling clothes. Few have even used the milk of God's Word, and grown thereby to the use and appreciation of the "strong meat" of Present Truth, which is for the developed man in Christ. It is not surprising, therefore, that those whom Spiritism and Swedenborgianism did not affect are now being gathered into Christian Science and Theosophy, the later developments of Satan's cunning and deception.

The strength of these delusions lies in the grave errors mixed with truths long held by Christian people, because of the "falling away" from the pure faith of the Apostolic Church, foretold in the Scriptures. Among these errors none is designed to open the heart and mind to these delusive and destructive theories of today more effectually than the general belief of the first lie--"Ye shall not surely die." The general acceptance of this lie results from a failure to understand the Bible doctrine concerning life and immortality, which were brought to light by our Lord Jesus through His Gospel of salvation from sin by His Ransom-sacrifice.

Every error held obscures and hinders some truth; and we have now come to the time when every child of God needs all the panoply of Truth--the armor of God. He who has not on the "whole armor of God" is sure to fall into error in this "evil day," this "hour of temptation, which has come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell on the earth." And "judgment must begin at the House of God." Who shall be able to stand? None except those who are "building themselves up in the most holy faith" with the precious promises and vital doctrines of the Word of God.

ALL BUT "VERY ELECT" TO BE DECEIVED

The advocates of these false doctrines are surprisingly alert and active everywhere, especially in the United States, where thought is most active and where liberty often means license. Hundreds of thousands have embraced these errors as new and advanced light. The extent of their success is not fully apparent to many; for their success lies in a still hunt for prey. Their advocates are to be found in almost every congregation of every denomination, and especially among the more cultured; and the "angel of light" feature is seldom neglected. The nominal Churches are already permeated, leavened with these false doctrines.

The Scriptural prophecy that "a thousand shall fall

at thy [the true Church's] side, and ten thousand at thy right hand" (Psalm 91:3-14), is now fulfilled before our eyes. The doctrine of the Ransom, the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world, has been the test. "The cross" has been the great stumbling-stone now, as in the days of our Redeemer's First Advent. Nearly all have fallen away from faith in this vital and fundamental doctrine of Christianity, of the Bible. By the great majority Jesus is now considered as only an Example for us to follow in certain particulars, not as our Redeemer, not as our Ransom.

From the teachings of Scripture we may expect that all but the "Very Elect" of God will be more or less stumbled by the errors and worldliness of our day. (Matthew 24:24-27; 2 Peter 2:3-11.) The "angel of light" sophistries of the powers of evil, and their works of healing, will surely delude all whose eyes of understanding are not open through heeding the testimony of the sure Word of God.

The doing of many wonderful works is one of the old tricks of Satan and his evil hosts. If disease and death are to a considerable extent under Satan's control during

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the reign of evil (Hebrews 2:14), why might he not, in his present emergency, when his fall is so near, reverse his methods of working and do some works of healing, thereby to clinch his errors and deceptions and to re-blind some whose eyes have been gradually opening under the light of the dawning Millennial Day, the Day of Christ?

We believe that he is adopting this policy, and that he will do so yet more. We believe that our Lord's pertinent inquiry was suggestive of this when He said, "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?" And, "If Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end." (Matthew 12:26; Mark 3:26.) So now, as Satan's kingdom is about to be overthrown, it is his effort to support it by many wonderful works, done by his unknowing as well as by his wilful agents, falsely and in the name of Christ.

THE FAITHFUL SOON TO SHINE FORTH

These various errors, "doctrines of demons," are gathering out of God's Kingdom "all that offend, and them which do iniquity" (and these constitute the great mass); while the faithful, who are to receive the Kingdom and be joint-heirs with Christ in His great Messianic Reign now about to be inaugurated, alone will stand. (Eph. 6:11-13.) When this separation is complete--and we believe it is now almost accomplished--the fire of the great Time of Trouble will make general havoc of present arrangements--social, financial, political, ecclesiastical. Then all errors and falsehoods in religion will go down

forever. Then the Lord's faithful Little Flock, having received immortality and the Divine nature, "shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father," seated with Christ in His Throne. (Revelation 3:21.) For a thousand years they shall reign over the world, for the scattering of all ignorance and blindness and the uplifting of all the families of the earth, the living and the dead.

Then let all who know the Truth as set forth in the sure Word of the Lord be active in its spread. The time is short! If you cannot preach orally in public, perhaps you can preach privately, to your neighbors and friends and those with whom you come in contact. Surely nearly all can preach privately, to your neighbors and friends and those with whom you come in contact. Surely nearly all can preach by the printed page and by pen, as well as by consistent daily conduct. Those about us need whatever help we can give them; and if they do not get it very soon they will surely become entangled in some of these latter-day delusions of the Adversary.

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THE MINISTRY OF SORROW

"Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord!" "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"--Psalm 130:1; Job 34:29.

THE life of every human being has its lights and shadows, its heights of joy and its depths of sorrow. These make up a large part of the warp and the woof of experience; and the web of character which flows from the active loom of life, will be fine and beautiful or coarse and homely, according to the skill and carefulness with which the individual weaves into it the threads of experience. In every life, in the present reign of sin and evil the somber shades predominate; and to such an extent is this true that the Word of God aptly describes the human family in their present condition as a groaning creation. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together until now," says the Apostle. The children of God are no exception to this universal rule; we also "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the deliverance of our Body"--our company, the Body of Christ.--Romans 8:22,23.

But while we are waiting for our deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to us, and the manner in which we receive them should be a matter of deepest concern; for according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or its adversity and trial bear to us a blessing or a curse. Those experiences which we are accustomed to regard as prosperous

often have in them subtle dangers. If wealth increases or friends multiply or a large measure of earthly joy comes to us, how almost imperceptibly the heart finds its satisfaction in the things of earth! But when the keen edge of sorrow and disappointment is felt, when riches or health fail, when friends forsake, and enemies take up a reproach against us, the natural tendency is to despondency and despair.

Just here is a very important part of the great warfare of the Christian's life. He must fight the tendencies of his old nature and must confidently claim and expect the victory, in the strength of the great Captain of his salvation. He must not yield to the alluring influences of favorable outward conditions, neither must he sink beneath the weight of trials and adversity. He must not permit any experience in life, however hard and painful, to sour and harden him or make him bitter, morose or unloving. Nor may he allow pride or love of show, or self-righteousness, to feed upon the temporal blessings which the Lord in His loving providence has given him to prove his faithfulness as a steward.

DEPTHS OF SORROW LEAD TO HEIGHTS OF JOY

Sorrow and griefs may, and perhaps often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord will be our Stay and Strength in every experience which He permits. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and trouble has never yet learned the joy and preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow and grief, when we draw near to the Lord, that He draws especially near to us. So the Psalmist found it, when in his deep affliction he cried to God, saying, "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice; let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!" (Vs. 1,2.) Feeling his own weaknesses and shortcomings, longing for full deliverance from every imperfection, and prophesying of the bountiful provisions of the Divine Plan of Salvation through Christ, he adds, "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities [imputing them to us], O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared [reverenced]."--Vs. 3,4.

How precious are such assurances when the soul is painfully conscious of its infirmities, of its utter inability to fully measure up to the perfect law of righteousness! How blessed it is to know that when our hearts are loyal and true, our God does not mark against us the unavoidable blemishes of our earthen vessel! If we come daily to Him for cleansing, through the merits of our Redeemer, our failures are not imputed to us, but freely forgiven and washed away. The perfect righteousness of our Savior is our glorious dress, arrayed in which we may come to God with humble boldness, courage--even

into the presence of the great Jehovah, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

If thus God ignores the infirmities of our flesh, and fully receives us and communes with us as His dear children, we should so regard one another, considering not and charging not against one another the infirmities of the flesh, which each humbly confesses, and which they, like us, are earnestly endeavoring to overcome by the grace of God, to the best of their ability. To each one of the Lord's true children the words of the Apostle apply: "If God be for us, who can be against us?... Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? Shall that God that justifieth? Who is he that condemneth? Shall Christ that died?" (Romans 8:31,33,34 --Diaglott.) The case is different, however, when the infirmities of the flesh are cultivated, indulged in without proper effort to correct them, and are justified, in order that the faults may be continued. Then, indeed, they are charged against us, and if we do not speedily "judge ourselves," and take decisive measures to correct them, the Lord will Himself judge and chasten us.--1 Cor. 11:31,32.

In the midst of the cares, perplexities and difficulties that come to the children of the Lord, we are to trust Him fully, and to possess our souls in peace and patience! We are to wait patiently for the Lord to outwork the issues of our experiences in His own good way. How necessary is the patient waiting on the Lord! The Psalmist says, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning." (Psalm 130:5, 6.) In every experience of sorrow and distress, and when the strain of the jarring discords and the stinging vexations, and wounds that make the heart bleed, threaten to overwhelm the spirit, let the child of God remember that "He knows, and loves, and cares," and that His ministering angel is ever near us, and that no trial will be permitted to be too severe. The dear Master is standing by the crucible, and the furnace heat will never be permitted to grow so intense that the precious gold of our characters shall be destroyed, or even injured. Ah, no! If by His grace the experiences may not work for our good, they will be turned aside. He loves us too well to permit any needless sorrow, any needless suffering.

THE REWARD OF PATIENT WAITING

"Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." (Psalm 37:5-7.) We must not be disappointed and allow our faith to falter when the test of patient endurance is

applied, while the outward peace and quietness which we crave tarry long. Our Father has not forgotten us when the answer to our prayers seems to be delayed. Outward peace and calm are not always the conditions best suited to our needs as New Creatures; and we would not desire conditions in which the precious fruits of the Spirit would not grow and develop in us. Therefore, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice." (1 Peter 4:12,13.) He who numbers the very hairs of our heads is never indifferent to the sufferings and needs of His weakest and humblest child. Oh, how sweet is the realization of such loving, abiding care! "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"

The saints have indeed in every sorrow and grief a blessed consolation of which the world is wholly in ignorance. None but the true child of God can know it. What is this consolation? Oh, you who have never enlisted under the banner of the Cross, who have never put yourselves wholly into the hands of the Lord to be moulded and fashioned into His glorious likeness, who have never made an earnest effort to stem the tide of the tendencies of your own fallen nature, who have never contended earnestly for Truth and righteousness in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, what can you know of the sweets of this Divine consolation? It is the precious balm of Gilead for wounded spirits on the battle-field of life, it is the stimulating, refreshing draught for fainting souls, hard pressed by the relentless foe. It is the soothing caress of a loving hand upon the fevered brow of the noble contender for Truth and godliness. It is the gentle whisper of hope and love and courage when heart and flesh are almost failing. This is Divine consolation, the only consolation that has in it any virtue of healing or refreshment. It is reserved alone for those noble souls who are faithfully bearing the burden and heat of the day in the service of the King of kings; while those who listlessly drift with the current of the world and the downward tendencies of the carnal nature can never have an intimation of its sweetness.

How loving and tender is our God, and how wise and strong! His promises have never failed those who have put their trust in Him. We may feel that our efforts to be good and to do good are very unproductive, that the opposition from without and within is very strong. But it is when we are weak, when we realize our own helplessness and incompetency, that we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. It is then that we may realize that His strength is made perfect in our weakness. The fact that we are weak and lame does not separate us from the love and power of our God, while we are striving to do His will; for "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." Then let us more and more lay hold of this strength of the Lord, that we may courageously pursue our course in the narrow

way of difficulty and trial. Precious indeed to the saint of God is the ministry of pain and sorrow!

"YE HAVE SEEN THE PATIENCE OF JOB"

The saints of every Age have learned the blessing of afflictions and sorrows. The Psalmist David says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes"; and again, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept Thy Word." (Psalm 119:67,71.) God's faithful servant Job suffered almost overwhelming troubles, but the Lord brought him out into a large place when his testings had accomplished their designed effect. He was proven and strengthened by his sore experiences. Few if any of us could suffer more. He suffered the loss of all his property, then of all his children, whom he loved, then of the love and loyalty of his wife; and finally, he was smitten with sore disease--boils, from head to foot. To crown all, three of his friends came to see him on hearing of his great trials; and instead of being true comforters, they added to his sorrows by insisting that his own sins must have been the cause of all these disasters; that his experiences must surely be punishments from the Lord because of unfaithfulness on his part. Surely poor Job was afflicted!

But did he lose his faith in God? Hear him: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord!" (Job 1:21.) "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." (Job 13:15.) Job was indeed much cast down, but he maintained his integrity of character and his faith in the Lord through all. He did not charge God with injustice, and God did not desert His

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faithful servant. He reproved his accusers and required them to offer sacrifice, and instructed Job to pray for them, that their trespasses might be overlooked. In the end he was blessed more abundantly than ever before. God made him a great type of the human family, of the troubles of their fallen condition and of their final restoration to all that was lost in Adam, with the blessings of added experiences to make them wise. How faithful is the Lord in all His dealings! Truly His children should never doubt His love; for

"Faith can firmly trust Him,
Come what may."

PRECIOUSNESS OF INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

It is when continued trust in the Lord and His many responsive providences in our lives have ripened into precious personal acquaintance and intimacy that we learn to delight in Him. Yes, it is when heart answers to heart, when pleading prayer brings recognized answers of peace,

when the Divine love and care have been clearly seen in the guidance of our way, that we can recognize the abiding presence with us of the Father and the Son. Then, however dark may be our way, however severe may be the storm that rages about us, the thought of Divine protection is ever with us, so that as the children of the Lord we are never in despair; though cast down, we are not destroyed; though persecuted, we are never forsaken. We know our Father's hand is ever at the helm, that His love and care are sure and unfailing.

Those who have come into real heart sympathy with God have learned to see Him as the Fountain of all goodness and Truth and blessing. To them He is the One altogether lovely. His Law is their delight. His friendship and love are their very life. When the heart has become thus centered in God, it is the most natural impulse to commit its way unto Him. These can truly sing with the poet:

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

Surely these have the desires of their heart, and no good thing shall be withheld from them. Their fervent prayers avail much, and in the Lord's good time their righteousness, however much it may now be misunderstood, misrepresented and evil-spoken of, shall be brought forth as the light--clear, cloudless and widely manifest; and their judgment, the justice and righteousness of their course and of their hearts, shall be brought forth as the noonday. Even while we remain here as aliens and foreigners in the enemy's land, we shall be fed, nourished, temporally and spiritually, and shall rejoice and be glad in the "house of our pilgrimage." Precious indeed are the promises of God; and to the praise of His abounding grace, His saints of the past and of the present all bear ample testimony to their fulfilment.

"Who need faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?--
Grace, which like the Lord, the Giver,
Never fails from Age to Age!"

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"THIS HONOR HAVE ALL HIS SAINTS"

"Let the saints be joyful in glory, let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance upon

the heathen, and punishment upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgments written."--Psalm 149:5-9.

WE ARE frequently asked whether we understand that there is to come a time when the Lord's people, the saintly ones, while still in the flesh, will have a full understanding of the entire Word of God, including the dark expressions of Ezekiel, Zechariah, Revelation, etc. In reply we usually remind the questioners that eighteen hundred years ago St. Paul wrote, "Take unto you the whole armor of God," including the "Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God"; and that we are, therefore, to understand that St. Paul himself and other Christians of his time had the "Sword of the Spirit." We are sure, however, that they did not understand certain portions of the Word of God which were not then due to be understood; for instance, that portion of Daniel's prophecy which the angel said was to be sealed up until "the time of the end," and many other prophecies which were not then unfolded. This has always been more or less true ever since. Prophecy unfolds gradually. Today more is due to be understood than ever before.

We are not to understand that the Bible will have no value in the incoming Age, but rather to the contrary of

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this. Our thought is that the Bible will be used then, not so much as the sole means of communicating God's will, but as a source of information, much as we now use histories. It will enlighten men respecting the Divine promises and supervision of the world and respecting God's laws, etc. There is nothing to indicate that every matter of which the Bible treats will be seen clearly by the Church while we are on this side the veil. The Apostle says that "now we see through a glass, obscurely"; but that beyond the veil we shall see "face to face." We shall see clearly; for we shall then be like our Lord. "Now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known."--1 Corinthians 13:12.

The Scripture which tells us that the Bible will be used in the future, tells us that all the world will be judged by the things written in these books, and informs us that the books will be opened (the books of the Old and the New Testaments), implying that up to that time they were not opened. (Revelation 20:12.) They are open now to God's people in a large measure. We believe that there has been "meat in due season" for the Household of Faith in every time. There was not so much knowledge of spiritual matters necessary in the past as in the present; hence never before have the books been so widely opened as they are today. Now the entire Plan

of God shines very clearly. But we do not know of anything in the Scriptures which says that these books will be understood in every detail by the Lord's people on this side of the veil, on this side of the resurrection change.

THE WORK NOW GOING ON

In speaking of this present time, as we think, the Prophet David says, "Let the saints be joyful in glory, let them sing aloud upon their beds." The children of God should be joyful at all times--even in tribulation, knowing that these experiences work out for us a development of character and a preparation for the Kingdom glories. The Psalmist here foretells that the saints at this time are at rest upon their beds, while they sing God's praise. This statement might be meaningless to us until we understand from other Scriptures that these beds represent creeds or the sum total of one's religious belief.

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While some are reclining on a short creed bed, which cramps and fetters them, and the narrow covers of which cannot give them warmth and comfort, the true saints of God have at this time beds of full and proper size, and a cover which is warm and ample. They are shown in this prophetic picture as taking their ease, resting in faith, while others are restless and uncomfortable. But while thus resting in these good beds, representing their mental attitude and heart condition, and while praising the Lord, they are using skilfully the "two-edged Sword." This Sword in their hands is the Bible. The thought is not necessarily that God's people have absolute knowledge of every feature of God's Word; but that they have all the knowledge needful to the efficient use of the Sword at this time, all the knowledge designed for the saints now, when this prophecy applies.

"Let the high-sounding praises of God be in their mouth," urges the Psalmist. We believe that this is more and more becoming true. The saints can praise God more intelligently and fully now than ever before. We can see our Lord's character better, because much of the ignorance, misconception, mysteries and obscurity have fled away. God's Word is shining out with more brightness than ever. We cannot see that our Brother John Calvin could have had very much of the high-sounding praises of God in his mouth; for it is surely not a high-sounding praise to declare that our God would assign thousands of millions of humanity to an eternity of torture. Nor can it be said of people of today who teach this same horrible doctrine, that they have the high-sounding praises of God in their mouths.

God's name is blasphemed, and His glorious character traduced and misrepresented every day. The world is told that God has a devilish Plan--that He has made a hell in which to torture a very large part of humanity;

and that He has the devils there already doing the torturing, and that this will go on throughout eternity. There are no high-sounding praises connected with any such beliefs and teachings. But the Lord's people who keep close to His Word are now able to tell forth the wondrous Story of God's Love, Wisdom, Justice, and Power as never before. And the Truth is surely accomplishing a work in the binding and fettering of error. We believe that the words of the Psalmist in this text are being fulfilled at this time. To some extent at least we are already engaging in the great work here depicted.

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AMOS THE FEARLESS PROPHET

--NOVEMBER 28.--AMOS 5:1-15.--

AMOS THE SHEPHERD BECOMES AMOS THE PROPHET--DISASTERS TO COME UPON THE TEN-TRIBE KINGDOM--DIVINE METHOD OF PRESENTING THE PROPHET'S MESSAGE--ISRAEL GUILTY OF INJUSTICE AND OPPRESSION--LESSONS FOR OUR DAY--ISRAEL'S RECOVERY FORETOLD--FULFILMENT OF THE PROPHECY OF AMOS NOW DUE.

"He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully."--Jeremiah 23:28.

OUR lesson has to do with the prophecy of Amos, who is noted as being one of the earliest prophets to write down the message which he delivered. True, Moses was a prophet; and we have his teachings in written form. David also was a prophet; and we have his teachings in the Psalms. But Moses' prophecies were chiefly through the types which he instituted under Divine direction; and David's prophecies were in poetic form, but were not discerned to be prophecies until our Lord and the Apostles so pointed them out. The Prophet Samuel seems not to have written any of his inspired messages; neither did Elijah, nor Elisha nor others of their time.

The Prophet Amos belongs to a period about a century after the Prophet Elijah and nearly a century before the Prophet Isaiah, and about two centuries before the Prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Amos declared himself to have been of humble birth. His parents were not illustrious; and he was not educated amongst the sons of the prophets. Like David he was a sheep tender, a farmer, upon whom the Lord poured His Spirit with mighty power, sending him to proclaim the disasters sure to come upon Israel unless a change of course should turn aside the deserved punishment for

transgressions against their Law.

The brunt of the Prophet's message fell against the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel. The Divine method of presenting the matter is noteworthy. The Prophet's message began with the adjoining nations: (1) Damascus, the capital of Syria, on the north, is mentioned as being in line with the Divine retributions; (2) the Philistines, on the west; (3) Tyre, to the northwest; (4) the Edomites, to the south; (5) the Ammonites, nearly on the east; (6) the Moabites, also to the south; (7) Judah, to the south; and lastly, the center of the Prophet's message, Israel--the ten-tribe kingdom.

We can fancy the attention which would be given to the Prophet's message by the people of Israel as they would hear fall from his lips words descriptive of the troubles coming upon surrounding nations which were their enemies. But as the circle grew narrower and narrower, and as the weight of the Prophet's testimony was found to be especially against themselves, we may be sure that there was intense indignation. If at first they shouted, "A true Prophet!" probably they afterwards gnashed upon him with their teeth.

This denunciation of Israel occurs chiefly in chapters 3-6 and in chapter 7:9-17. When the Prophet had gone so far as to tell openly of the fall of the reigning dynasty, Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, interfered, bidding Amos to return to his own country. But under the special power of the Holy Spirit, using him to deliver a particular message, the Prophet Amos refused to return home until he had accomplished his errand. He also added to the retribution of Israel some prophecies respecting the priest's own household.

CHANGED CONDITIONS--CHANGED METHODS

In drawing from the experiences of the Prophet Amos a lesson applicable to ourselves of today, we must remember that the Lord no longer sends His messages after this manner. Conditions have changed, circumstances have changed, and prophecies of the kind inspired by the Lord in early days are no longer His method. Respecting these prophecies, the Apostle Peter tells us, "Prophecy came not in olden times by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:21.) Again, "Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven."-- 1 Peter 1:12.

In view of the changed conditions and the difference of operation of the Divine power, it is for us to preach

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the Word to whomsoever hath an ear to hear, to call attention

to the application of the prophecies and testimonies of ancient times, and thus to make known the Divine Plan as it becomes due to be understood by those for whom it is designed--the Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile. For any one to undertake at the present time to copy either the Prophet Elijah or the Prophet Amos or any other of the ancient Prophets of Israel would indicate a total misapprehension on his part respecting the Divine will and the Divine message; indeed, it might even be surmised to indicate a mental unbalance. As the Apostle declares, we speak the things that we know, and we testify to the things spoken aforetime for our admonition. (Romans 15:4.) There is a good lesson for us, nevertheless, in the method which the Lord guided the Prophet to take in delivering his message.

Our Lord leaves to us of this Gospel Dispensation considerable latitude in the choice of means for serving His cause. He exhorts us, however, to be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves; and He promises us rewards in proportion as we exercise such carefulness in His service as He can especially bless and use. Those who use wisely the pounds and talents intrusted to them are to have proportionate rewards when the Kingdom of God's dear Son shall have been set up. Let us then, in the exercise of our liberty and in accord with the Master's injunction to be as wise as serpents, notice that the Prophet's message respecting unpleasant and direful matters, all of which were true, began in such a manner as to rivet the attention of his hearers.

The Apostle Paul practised this same wisdom, and mentioned it subsequently to some whom he had brought to a knowledge of the Lord. He said, "Being crafty, I caught you with guile." (2 Corinthians 12:16.) That is, he presented the matter to them in the form that would be most attractive to their hearts. He presented nothing untrue, however. Truth can be stated in a more or less palatable or unpalatable form.

"NOT ALL THAT SAY LORD, LORD"

Another lesson in connection with the Prophet Amos' message is that his opponents rose up from amongst those who were professedly religious--the priests. And so it was with our Lord and the Apostles. The priests and the religious teachers of their day were the chief opponents of the Gospel in its truth and purity; and we must expect the same in our day. The Truth, in proportion as it has been declared in its purity, has always roused opposition, and has always found its chief opposers amongst those who have "a form of godliness"--but generally amongst those who lack its power.

Today's lesson is a part of the Prophet's pleading with the Israelites that they return to harmony with God and thus avert the calamities which must otherwise be expected. The history of that time shows that it was a very prosperous period, not only for Judah, but also for

the ten-tribe kingdom. The prosperity was of the earthly kind. Riches were accumulated. But these were in the hands of the great; and the Prophet proceeds to warn the rich that the poor were being unjustly dealt with. He intimates that it would be from this source that the trouble would ultimately come; that the only terms upon which they could hope to live as a nation would be by seeking the Lord. It would be in vain for them to seek help at Bethel or in Gilgal or in Beersheba, the centers of their religious institutions, which were corrupt. These religious institutions would all go down in the trouble which the Prophet predicted.

The Lord Himself must be sought with an honest heart; else He would cause destruction to break out like a fire to devour the House of Joseph. The ten-tribe kingdom is here called the House of Joseph, because the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were of preponderating influence in the nation; and these two tribes had sprung from Joseph. Hence the fire breaking out in the House of Joseph meant the destruction which would come upon the ten-tribe kingdom unless they repented.

The Prophet proceeds to particularize some of the wrongs on account of which they were in danger. Justice was not rendered in their courts. Instead of the sweets of Justice, those who appealed to their courts, if they were poor, got wormwood--that is, bitterness, disappointment. The Prophet declares that righteousness was cast down to the earth; that equity was not a matter of primary consideration. He proceeds to point out that bribery was rife; that wealth, power and influence could accomplish almost anything. There must be a turning from this condition; and relief could come only from turning to the Lord.

The Prophet refers to Divine Power in language somewhat similar to that used by the Patriarch Job. (Job 9:9.) Pointing to the group Pleiades in the constellation Taurus and to Orion, he would have his hearers see that the One whose assistance they needed was the One who was able to create the earth and the heavens also, the One who was able not only to gather the waters into the seas, but also to call the waters back from the seas to the clouds and to pour it down upon the earth again in its seasons. This great God was the One whom they needed; and all others assisting them would be powerless against Him.

GOD CARETH FOR THE POOR AND NEEDY

In verse 9 the Prophet intimates that God's Power would be with the poor and oppressed for their deliverance; and that this would mean destruction against the strong and powerful, against those that hate reproof and abhor the upright, those that are in opposition to any who reprove unrighteousness.

Verses 11 and 12 specify and particularize the nature of the injustice which was practised and which needed

to be renounced and discontinued. Verse 13 implies that there were amongst the Israelites some who did not approve of the general course; but that these, being helpless and in the minority, kept silence from prudential reasons--because the time was an evil one, and to have espoused the cause of the oppressed would have brought trouble upon them without bringing relief to the oppressed. But the Prophet Amos was especially commissioned of the Lord to give this very reproof. Hence he must not keep silence because of prudence or for any other consideration, but must speak his message with boldness.

Similarly, it is not the duty of every one of the Lord's people today to take the place of Amos and become public reprovers of public officials, etc., even though they may see unrighteousness practised. Prudence, wisdom, is to be used in connection with whatever we do. Our commission today is not that of reproofing nations, but that of letting our light so shine that others may see our good works, and glorify our Father who is in Heaven. Our Lord declares that He will rebuke the nations; that He will humble their pride; that He will cast down the mighty from their positions; that He will exalt the humble--in due time. To His people He says, "Wait ye upon Me, until the Day that I rise up to the prey."--Zephaniah 3:8,9.

The lesson closes with an exhortation from the Prophet that his hearers should make a thorough reformation

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--that they should seek good and not evil, love righteousness and hate sin. If they would do these things, then indeed they might apply to themselves the promises of God, as they were already disposed to do, claiming that they were His people. Such claims would be appropriate enough if they would conform to the Divine requirements, but not otherwise. The Lord would be gracious to them as a people if they would come into line with His regulations and requirements. But otherwise they must expect the chastisements and punishments already foretold.

Remembering that the Israelites were a typical people, we properly enough scan the text and the context to see whether anything connected with the prophecy of Amos was of larger application than it appeared to him and the people of his day. From the words of the Apostle Peter already cited, and from other examples in the prophecies, we are justified in expecting this. For instance, in David's prophecies how little the utterer of the words, "Not a bone of Him shall be broken," understood of the real fulfilment of his declaration! Again, when he said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption," how little David or the people of Israel understood the import of those words --that David was a Prophet, and was unwittingly speaking of Christ and His resurrection from the dead--from Sheol! So, while realizing the appropriateness of the

Prophet Amos' words, we find certain items in connection with this prophecy which imply a still larger fulfilment of his predictions upon Nominal Israel in the end of this Age.

GIANTS IN THE EARTH FOREBODE EVIL

It is not for us to claim that today Justice is fallen in the streets, and that Righteousness cannot enter in. It is not for us to claim that the poor are inordinately taxed or crushed or robbed. On the contrary, we freely state that there is a great deal of righteousness meted out in the courts of Christendom. We have sometimes wondered how natural men have ever brought together so many wise, just and reasonable laws and regulations. Nevertheless there is a sense in which injustice, inequity, is now operating, not so much through any individual evil as through the changed conditions under which we are living. The blessings of the New Dispensation, coming to us under social conditions which are based upon individual selfishness, are tending to make a few very rich, and before very long, we fear, will be found so to operate as to make many very poor.

The appropriating of the advantages of our day, while legally done under laws that at one time were equitable, is bound to work a great hardship--putting the power and the financial control of the world into the hands of comparatively few. True, these few giants are as yet very moderate in their requirements and dealings; some of them are even generous. But the Scriptures seem to imply clearly that it will not be long until the power, willingly or unwillingly, will be so exercised as to bring great distress upon the mass of humanity, grinding them as between two millstones.

From this standpoint the Prophet's words might well be appropriated by Christendom. But we may be sure that those in power and position are not disposed to hearken to Amos or to any one else; and hence we must expect what the Scriptures everywhere point out--that the overthrow of Christendom will come suddenly, in "a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation"; and that in this conflict the Lord, who made the Pleiades and Orion, will be He that will strengthen the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled ones shall rise against the strong in anarchy.--Verse 9.

The close of Amos' prophecy tells of the recovery of Israel and of the blessing of the Lord that will be upon all mankind, including the Gentiles, at that time. It is this prophecy that the Apostle James quoted in the Council at Jerusalem, saying, "After this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of Israel, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."--Acts 15:16,17.

We are living at the time when this prophecy is about to be fulfilled. The recovery of Natural Israel is about

to take place under the reestablishment of God's Kingdom in the world--the Kingdom which once was typically represented in King David, but which is to be actually established in the greater David--the Beloved One. Under that Kingdom, reestablished under more favorable conditions, a Heavenly Kingdom, the residue of men will be given an opportunity to seek the Lord; for the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill the whole earth.

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"PRIDE GOETH BEFORE DESTRUCTION"

--DECEMBER 5.--2 CHRONICLES 26:8-21.--

ISRAEL A TYPICAL KINGDOM--MESSIAH TO ESTABLISH THE ANTITYPE--UZZIAH'S POLITICAL AND MILITARY SUCCESS PROVES A SNARE TO HIM--HIS SIN OF PRESUMPTION --ITS PUNISHMENT--A LESSON TO BOTH THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD--IGNORANCE OF GOD'S LAW NOT AN ACCEPTABLE EXCUSE.

"A man's pride bringeth him low; but he that is of a lowly spirit shall obtain honor."--Proverbs 29:23. R.V.

UZZIAH was a great and prosperous king in Jerusalem. He made a good beginning, was reverential toward God, and put his capital and the remainder of his kingdom into good condition for defense against enemies. When thinking of the wars of Israel, we are to remember that for a time this nation represented God's rule in the earth in a sense that no other nation ever did, either before or after them.

The kings of Israel were anointed by Divine commission and authority, as were no other kings; and they were said to "sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord," as no other kings before or since have held dominion. Theirs was not, however, the Kingdom of God for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come," but merely a preparatory arrangement with the typical Israelites.

God's Kingdom will really come to earth after Messiah shall establish it. For a thousand years He shall reign, to uplift the humble, to bless all who seek righteousness, to punish and correct all others, and finally to destroy the incorrigible in the Second Death. It was, therefore, quite in line with the arrangements of the time that the kings of Israel and of Judah should fortify and strengthen themselves and defend the land which the Almighty had especially given to their nation.

THE KING'S PRESUMPTION

The truthfulness of the Scripture, "Pride goeth before

destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall," was illustrated in King Uzziah. When his fame had spread abroad

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and he began to feel his greatness, pride came in. He forgot that he was merely the Lord's representative in the kingdom, and that his first duty as a loyal subject of God was to hearken and to obey the Divine commands.

Having accomplished great things from a political and military standpoint, King Uzziah essayed to a religious distinction. Evidently he felt that God was proud of him and of his success, and would be very well pleased to have him enter the Temple after the manner of the priests and offer incense at the Golden Altar. He knew of the rules and regulations governing the Temple and its service, but considered himself above them. He would go directly to God, and not recognize the priest.

Many successful people fall into the same error of supposing that their success in business or in politics, their brilliancy of mind or their polish of education is the only requisite in the sight of Jehovah God. They feel that if they should go to church and acknowledge God, He should be very proud to have them and, of course, should give them the first place in everything. This is a mistake. The great King Eternal, "the Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity" (Isaiah 57:15), has rules and regulations governing all attempts to approach Him. There is just the One Way of approach, and no other.--John 14:6.

THE MELCHISEDEC PRIEST

"Oh!" says one, "I see. You wish us to understand that the laity have no access to God; that they must come through the clergy, even as King Uzziah should have approached God through Israel's high priest. But I deny that the clergy are any more than other mortals. I claim that many of them are less brilliant of mind than myself; that many of them are less educated, and others totally devoid of business sense. I admit that it may be well enough for the common people to approach God through the clergy; but whenever I approach, I do so on the strength of my own personal intelligence and with the realization that the Almighty is glad to have me come. Often I pray, 'O Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men, nor even as this publican.'"--Luke 18:11.

No, friend; this is not our thought--not the Bible thought, not the lesson which we should draw from the Scriptures under consideration. We must admit that there is no Scriptural authority for a clerical class in the Church of Christ--unless it be the Twelve Apostles, St. Paul taking the place of Judas. Scripturally those Twelve rank as a hierarchy--the special mouthpiece of Jesus.

We are not intimating that the soul desirous of approaching God must come through the clergy of any denomination. We do emphasize, nevertheless, the fact that

there is but the One Way of approaching God, and that is by and through the Great Advocate whom He hath appointed for us--"Jesus Christ the Righteous"--"a Priest for the Age after the Order of Melchisedec." (1 John 2:1; Hebrews 5:6.) "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me," was His Message. "There is none other name given under Heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved," is the Apostle's Message.--Acts 4:12.

INCENSE AT THE GOLDEN ALTAR

Those whose eyes of understanding have never been opened to a realization that Jesus is the Divine Appointee for the reconciliation of the world to God may be excused if they approach God in prayer aside from Him. Their prayers may be answered to a limited extent, if offered in sincerity, from the heart, and because, as St. Paul intimates, "God winked at" their ignorance of His arrangements.--Acts 17:30.

But as King Uzziah knew of the Divine arrangement that only the priest could offer to the Almighty incense on the Golden Altar, so those who have come to a realization of the fact that Jesus is the great antitypical Priest, through whom communication with the Father has been opened up, would come under condemnation should they intrude into the Divine Presence in prayer otherwise than as provided in God's arrangement, even as King Uzziah was smitten with leprosy for his presumption and pride.

Leprosy, Scripturally considered, is a type of sin. King Uzziah's experiences, therefore, signify typically that whoever would approach God aside from His ordained Priest, having a knowledge of the impropriety, would come under Divine sentence as a wilful sinner. The penalty would be in proportion to the degree of enlightenment previously enjoyed.

FOURSCORE VALIANT PRIESTS

When the king entered the Holy of the Temple to offer incense at the Golden Altar, the high priest and eighty of the under priests followed him, protesting against his sacrilege. Although this was only their duty, nevertheless it marked them as valiant, courageous men; for in ancient times a king had great power. King Uzziah was feeling his own greatness and was proud of it; therefore he was likely to resent any interference with his kingly prerogatives.

Their words of protest voiced what the king already knew respecting the restrictions attaching to the services of the Temple. But they added, "Go out, for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honor from Jehovah God." True honor, true blessing, true prosperity, cannot be found in opposition to the Divine arrangements. The king's course, therefore, must bring him dishonor. Had he hastened to glorify God, he would have received a blessing, no doubt. But instead, violation of the Divine

Law brought him the curse.

The lesson is a plain one, exemplified by our text and by our Lord's words, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; he that exalteth himself shall be abased." (Luke 14:11.) It was not enough, even if the king had good intentions, instead of pride, backing him up. Good intentions should have guided him to a study of the Divine arrangements and promises. Ignorance of the Law is not an excuse. Hence the Apostle's exhortation, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."-- 2 Timothy 2:15.

The lesson seems to be one of humility, both for the Church and for the world. Some are born humble-minded, and others are born self-conceited. The latter, therefore, are handicapped as respects this grace, though Scripturally advantaged in respect to courage to battle against present adversities. On the whole, our handicaps through imperfections of the flesh are not so unequal as to make it easier for one than for another to enter into the Kingdom under the call of this Gospel Age. For where much is given, much is required; and the judgment of the Lord will be according to the heart, the will, the intention, the endeavor, and not according to the flesh, its weaknesses and its failures.

Humility is important, not only on its own account, but also because the other graces of the Holy Spirit cannot be cultivated without it. At the head of the list of these spiritual graces is meekness. How could one be gentle or make good progress in the cultivation of these graces if he were not meek? How could one be patient and submissive in the trials and difficulties of life if not meek? How could one be kind toward opponents and kind in all things if he were not meek? How could one be patient

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toward all if he were not meek? How could one have brotherly kindness except through meekness? How could one be Godlike except he possessed meekness? How could one be loving in the Scriptural sense without meekness? Along these lines all who will be of the Church will be tested. And meekness and humility must be cultivated and must abound in the heart, in order to enable the cultivation of the other fruits of the Holy Spirit.

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INTERESTING LETTERS

"LIGHT AFFLICTIONS--BUT FOR A MOMENT"

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER IN THE LORD:--

"Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and

from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you, making request with joy, for your fellowship in the Gospel from the first day until now."--Phil. 1:2-5.

The Vow brought me much blessing, likewise the Resolve; then I began to watch for suggestions. Last fall came one: Z.'14, p. 341--to live each day as though it were our last. That was beautiful to me, and most helpful; to think to myself each morning, You wouldn't want to go Home tonight to a kind, gracious Father and a loving Bridegroom unless you, too, had all the day been kind, gracious and loving. It checked many a hasty word and act and mellowed all my life.

When the suggestion concerning the cultivation of Love came, I rejoiced, for I knew a blessing lay in that also; and there has, and a deep and rich one, too. Not only have I been enabled day by day to be more kind in my thoughts, gentle in my words, and loving in my deeds, but my eyes have opened wider and wider to the measureless love of our Heavenly Father and His dear Son. In every day I find Their love; I have only to follow step by step as They beautifully arrange each day and fill it with blessings and love.

I have more trials than ever before, but they are only blessings in disguise. I am learning what St. Paul meant when he spoke of "light afflictions, but for a moment." The "eternal weight of glory" is getting brighter each day, as I learn more of the height and depth and length and breadth of the wonderful love of God. I shall be glad to go Home by whatever way my Father sees best, but I am not anxious as I used to be, for each day is full of His love and blessing.

I have wished to tell you particularly (as an isolated child of God) of a rich blessing I found I was not shut out from, did I but reach out by faith and claim it: Some time since, a dear sister of the Cameron Class was unable to attend the usual Wednesday night testimony meeting, and so, alone at home, she had a blessed testimony meeting. Afterward, when she told of this experience, I wondered if this blessing were not for all the isolated ones. I remembered your admonitions in Vol. VI. concerning the Memorial--that an isolated individual allow his faith to go out with sufficient strength to the Lord to claim the promise of Matthew 18:20, regarding the Lord and himself as two. It seemed to me the same principle applied here, and I began the Wednesday night meetings--and such blessings from the Lord! It is as good as the DAILY MANNA morning service--to be in union with the Body--the whole world over!

I have been very careful to use Wednesday evening, because the Lord's blessing is more especially with me on that day. Other isolated sisters are testifying to this same blessing. We had been getting too much solid food and not enough fluid, heretofore.

The blessing of fellowship with yourself still continues with me through the pages of THE WATCH TOWER. It is ever "meat in due season," for which my appetite grows continually keener.

Dear Brother, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the

Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace!"

Your sister in the Anointed, HOPE TATE.--Canada.

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BLAZED A TRACK THROUGH BAD THEOLOGY

OUR WELL-BELOVED PASTOR:--

Loving greetings in our dear Lord and Redeemer, to you and all of "like precious faith."--Ephesians 3:14-21.

Beloved Brother, it has been our thought this year to send you some slight token of the great love we have for you, as God's appointed servant and channel for dispensing the "Meat in due season" to the Household of Faith. How grateful we are to you, under God, for blazing a track for us out of a maze of bad theology! Daily we bear you up before the Throne of Grace, praying that He who has so far worked out His will in you may complete His work in His Elect, that you, with us and all the dear ones who are earnestly pressing forward, may be presented faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

We ask you, dear Brother, kindly to accept the HEAVENLY MANNA sent herewith with our autographs, also the 2L. Money Order enclosed as a token of our loving esteem from those to whom the Truth has come at the village of Turangarere.

Sister Black by asking Sister Kelly to read Vol. 1, was the means of presenting the Truth which Sister Kelly was privileged to pass on to Sisters Mitchell, Merritt, Clough and Mulvay; and Sister Clough was used to pass the Message on to Sister Brown, and Sister Mitchell to Sister Gage. All are fully consecrated and pressing forward for the Great Prize.

Sister Black received the First Volume in a very strange way. Her little granddaughter was buying a book for a birthday present for her grandmother at a second-hand dealer's shop. The man advised her to take the book, as her grandmother would like it; and so this great blessing came to us.

Another dear one, Sister Bessie Lambei, sent a subscription asking that she, too, might be included in the gift to the Pastor to whom, under God, we all owe so much. Sister Lambei is one of the Lord's isolated ones.

We are hoping if it is the Lord's will to meet in Wellington for Convention on December 25th; but just now New Zealand trade is paralyzed by an industrial strike, which if not soon settled may hinder our meeting. But we all look forward soon now to be favored by being present at the Great Convention of the First-born ones (Hebrews 12:22-24) beyond the Veil. Then we hope to meet our Beloved Master; and among all the dear Elect, what joy it gives us to look forward to meeting the dear Pastor, who has been so abundantly used of God to bring blessings to us and all the dear "Feet" Members of the Body, which is the Church! Earnestly entreating God's blessing upon your labors of Love for Him and His,

Your loving Sisters, by His Grace.

North Island, New Zealand.

[The Editor begs these dear Sisters in Christ to accept his thanks for their kind words of comfort, which he will always cherish as priceless in value; also for the copy of MANNA containing their autographs. As for the 2L., he is putting it into the "Comfort Fund," from which he sometimes has the privilege of doling out a few dollars for the aid of brethren falling into dire need. The Editor has no lack. The Society's allowance to him and all the office workers, of ten dollars monthly for clothing and incidentals, is more than sufficient for our comfort.]

THE CANADA RED CROSS CONTRIBUTIONS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Here in Canada there is a general movement on for soliciting funds for the Canadian Red Cross work. Will you kindly give us your view on the subject?

This is a matter of personal judgment--as is every benevolence. The Lord's people must remember that their all is consecrated to Him, and they must seek to use their best judgment respecting the use of their financial talents, as well as others. We would feel disposed to resent anything in the way of an attempt to coerce or compel contributions, and would prefer to exercise our own judgment and conscience, and not to have any one tell us what we should do, or should

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not do. However, emergencies might arise in which we would have the right to allow mercenary considerations to have their weight--if, for instance, because an employee should fail to contribute it would bring him into disfavor with his employer, so that he might lose his situation, or if a business firm found that they might be boycotted unless they contributed liberally, we believe that they would have a right to treat this matter from a commercial basis. The giving to the Red Cross Society would certainly not interfere with anybody's conscientious scruples.

An examination of the Canadian Militia Act shows that certain persons are exempt from military obligations; viz., Judges, Government clerks, Telegraph clerks, Revenue clerks, Wardens of Prisons and Asylums, Policemen, Firemen, College professors, the Clergy, the son of a widow and persons averse to military service on religious grounds.

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International Bible Students Association Classes

STUDIES AND LECTURES BY MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION

