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#### SIGNS OF THE PRESENCE OF THE KING

"But who may abide the Day of His Coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap."--Malachi 3:2.

THE words of the Prophet given in our text refer to the close of the present Gospel Age. It is the same Day prophesied by the Apostle Paul when he declared, "The fire of that Day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (1 Corinthians 3:13.) It is the Day of which the Apostle Peter wrote so graphically when he said that in that great Day of the Lord the heavens should be on fire and the elements should melt with fervent heat, and that the earth and all the works therein should be burned up. (2 Peter 3:10.) It is the Day of which the Prophet Zephaniah spoke when he said that in the great Day of the Lord all the earth should be devoured with the fire of God's jealousy. (Zephaniah 3:8.) Isaiah, Jeremiah, and many of the faithful Prophets of God prophesied of this Day. The Prophet Daniel was instructed by the angel of the Lord that in that Day there should be a "Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation." (Daniel 12:1.) Our Lord Jesus Himself verified this prophecy, and added that never afterwards should there be such a time.--Matthew 24:21,22.

The Scriptures call this Day "the Day of the Lord," "the Day of Jehovah," "the Day of God," "the Day of Christ," "the Day of Vengeance," "that great and notable Day," etc. It is the Day in which the Old Order is to perish and the glorious New Order is to be ushered in. In foretelling this Day, both the Prophets and the Apostles

speak of the class which will stand in this Day when all others shall fall. St. Paul says that everything which can be shaken down will be; and that only the Kingdom which will then be set up, and which cannot be shaken, will remain. (Hebrews 12:25-29.) The present order of society--the nominal church systems, financial institutions, political institutions--all--will go down.

During the Gospel Age many who have not been Christians have associated themselves with the Church. The civilized world of today call themselves "Christians," in contradistinction to the nations which they call "heathen," though from the Scriptural standpoint they are all heathen--Gentiles. Among all these various nations we find many religions, whose devotees claim that they have consecrated themselves to God. But the touch-stone by which these claims may be tested is the Word of God. See Galatians 1:6-9. To the true Church of Christ alone will God give the Messianic Kingdom. Some who really have Christ and His work of sacrifice as their foundation will be saved, but at the expense of all their works, their character-structure, which the "fire" of this Day will consume. The tare class in the nominal churches will be bundled and "burned," not as individuals, but as professed Christians; that is to say, their professions will be seen to be without foundation. They will come to see how grossly in error they were--how far removed from the Truth.

#### "SAVED AS THROUGH FIRE"

The ones who are upon the Rock Christ Jesus, the only true Foundation, are those who have accepted Jesus as their Ransom-sacrifice, and have consecrated themselves wholly to God through Him. All these, "have been called in one hope of their calling." (Ephesians 4:4.) Many of these will fail to make their calling and election sure and will suffer great loss. They did not build properly upon this Foundation, Christ, a structure of gold, silver and precious stones of Truth and of whole-hearted loyalty to the Lord. They will suffer the loss of the Kingdom, and through much tribulation will take a lower place, before the Throne--not rulers, but honorable servants of the ruling class. All who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit must, as we have shown elsewhere, either be born upon the spirit plane or lose life altogether. Those who prove wholly faithful will be born Divine beings. Those not wholly faithful, and who miss the great "prize," though not denying the Lord that bought them, will be born spirit beings of a lower order.

The tribulations which characterize the end of this Age will thoroughly awaken these careless ones. Certain special tribulations, we understand, have come to those who were of this class all through the Age. But apparently a larger number of these are living now, at the close of the Age; and these must go through "the great tribulation," and must wash their soiled robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Revelation 7:9-17.)

They will have a blessed portion after their purification, but far less glorious than that to which they were called.

The Apostle Paul in his writings lays special emphasis upon the fundamental importance of correct doctrinal teaching. It made no difference whether Paul or Apollos or even an angel from Heaven taught anything, it must be in harmony with the foundation doctrines which had been given them by the Lord. (Galatians 1:6-12.) He assured the Church that what he had taught them was from God; and that even if an angel should bring them another Gospel, it would be a proof that such angel had deflected from loyalty to the Lord. That Jesus Christ died to secure the Redemption-price for Adam and his race is the foundation doctrine of the Church, which was received from

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Jesus Himself and from His faithful mouthpieces and which was shown in the Divinely given types of the Law. Whoever taught this fundamental truth faithfully was a real help to the people of God. Yet even such a teacher might help them to build, even on this proper foundation, a faith and character structure which would not stand the tests of the great Day of the Lord; for the fire of that Day would surely prove the nature of this structure. Consequently, both teacher and pupil would suffer loss and be saved only "as through fire."

#### INVULNERABILITY OF THE TRUTH

This prophecy of our text is still in process of fulfilment. The "refiner's fire" is even now doing its work, and thousands and tens of thousands are falling all about us. The Prophet's query is very pertinent at this time. We see that the false teachings which have come down during these many centuries since the Apostles fell asleep have made humanity incapable of reasoning correctly on religious subjects. In the past we have had our own experiences along this line. Whenever anything religious was mentioned we seemed to lose our common sense. Now we have lost our fear of the dread penalty of using our reason. We have come back to the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles, and we find them grand and beautiful.

Those who have been teaching errors will soon be ashamed (Isaiah 66:5), while the fire of this Day will only manifest the Truth to all. No power, no tongue, no pen, can successfully contradict the Truth, the great Divine Plan of the Ages. It is strong before its enemies and before all who make assaults upon it, and ere long the folly of its foes shall be made known to the whole world. "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE KING

The coming of the King to possess His Kingdom will mean a personal as well as a national and a church examination,

judgment and treatment. It will mean, when the Kingdom is fully inaugurated, the suppression of vice in a manner and to a degree never attempted by any earthly reformer. There will be no license to do evil in any form. The only liberty granted will be liberty to do right. It is no wonder that so few experience joy at the proclamation of the return of earth's rightful King to reign. To many it will mean the loss of their present advantages over their fellowmen. To many it will mean the prohibition and cutting off of sins now indulged in and enjoyed.

Nevertheless, both the King and the Kingdom are not only coming, but are here; and the present troubles and shakings in church and state, and the general awakening of the people are the results of influences emanating from that King and Kingdom. Though men know it not, it is the smiting of the Kingdom of God that is even now preparing for the wreck of all the kingdoms of the earth, that the way may be opened for the establishment of righteousness in the world, that men's hearts may be humbled and prepared for the righteous Government which is to take control of earth. Worldly men cannot

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realize this; for this Kingdom cometh not with outward observation--with outward show and display. Therefore they cannot say, "Lo, here," or "Lo, there."

In spite of the awful war now raging, growing fiercer and more deadly every day, these continue to hope for peace, trying to convince themselves and others that the trouble must soon be brought to an end, and that matters will then go on as formerly. They blind themselves to the true conditions and refuse to believe that God has determined to permit this trouble to spread and involve the entire world and to bring about the utter overthrow of the Present Order of things. Selfishness, pride and love of money have closed their eyes. We give here an extract from a poem written some years ago by a Christian minister, which forcefully describes present conditions and the judgment of God which is now to be visited upon the world for their lasting good:

"Woe to the Age when gold is god, and law a solemn jest,  
That helps the boldly vile to crush the noblest and the best!  
When Mammon o'er cheap millions flings his gilded harness  
strong,  
And drives them tame beneath his lash down broad highways  
of wrong;  
While Truth's shrill clarion down the sky peals faintly o'er  
the rout,  
And dust and fumes of earth and sin shut Heaven's blest  
sunlight out!  
Then look for lightning!--God's red bolts must cleave the  
stifling gloom,  
In righteous wrath to purge the world in Sodom's fearful  
doom!"

But we are thankful that while the judgments of a righteous God against sin must come at this time, yet the ultimate results will be glorious, when the world will come forth chastened, subdued, purified by the awful baptism of fire and blood; when they shall come to see that sin, selfishness and corruption have wrought their legitimate outcome. Then mankind will be ready to cry to the Lord and to long for His deliverance, and He will be entreated of them and will lift them up and bless them.

But the coming of the King means much trouble and the general overturning of the kingdoms of this world which, while professing to be kingdoms of God, are really under the control of the "prince of this world," Satan, "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (John 14:30; 16:11; Ephesians 2:2.) It means the shaking of society in a manner and to an extent never before known, and so thoroughly that another shaking will never be necessary. (Hebrews 12:26,27.) It means the breaking in pieces of the empires and governments of the world as a potter's vessel. It means the passing away of the present ecclesiastical "heavens," and the fall of many of its bright "stars." At present the sunlight of the true Gospel, and the moonlight of the Law with its types and shadows, are obscured by the thick clouds of worldly wisdom. "The sun shall be turned into darkness, the moon into blood."--Joel 2:30,31.

While many would rejoice to see society relieved of many of its selfish, life-sapping ulcers, they seem to realize that so just and impartial a Judge as the Lord Himself might cut off certain long-cherished sins to which they desire to cling; they fear to have their personal selfishness touched. And their fears are well-founded. He will bring to light all the hidden things of darkness, and correct and suppress private as well as public sin and selfishness. He will expose depths of corruption never before realized. He will make "Justice the line and righteousness the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." (R.V.) He will "bring down them that dwell on High, the lofty city [Babylon] He layeth low, . . . even to the dust." He will bring down them who have "made lies their refuge."--Isaiah 28:15,17,18; 26:5,6.

#### LIFT UP TRUTH'S GLORIOUS BANNER!

It is written that the Day of the Lord would come as a thief and a snare upon the whole world, and that only God's fully consecrated Church would be in the light and not be taken unawares. Many of the consecrated have been deceived by looking for the Heavenly King to come again in the flesh. They forgot that the only reason for His coming in the flesh at His First Advent was "for

the suffering of death" as man's corresponding-price; and that now He is highly exalted, a glorious spirit Being. "He was put to death in flesh, but made alive in spirit." (1 Peter 3:18.) They forgot that the Apostle Paul also said, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we Him [so] no more." (2 Corinthians 5:16.) The true children of God are coming more and more to see how the Master comes at His Second Advent, and are not expecting to see Him in the flesh and with their natural eyes.

We who know that the King of Glory and His blessed Kingdom are the only remedy for the wrongs and woes of man should be pointing the groaning creation to this Kingdom, rather than to the poultices of their own contriving which can do no real good. Tell them the meaning of present world-wide conditions, and how, beyond the troubles now overspreading the world, will come the glorious Times of Restitution foretold by all the holy Prophets since the world began. Tell them that the death of Jesus was the Redemption-price for the entire race of Adam, and that His return is for the purpose not only of delivering His Church, but to bind Satan and set free all His captives, including all who are in the graves, giving all who will an opportunity to come into the liberty of sons of God, under the terms of the New Covenant, soon to be established.

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#### SEEKING MEMBERSHIP IN GOD'S KINGDOM

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."--Matthew 6:33.

AT THE beginning of our Lord's earthly ministry the Jewish nation were invited to become the Kingdom of God. The offer of God's chief blessing was "to the Jew first." For many centuries they had been God's special people. They had been called to be unto God "a kingdom of priests and an holy nation"--a peculiar treasure unto God, composed of a priestly class and a chosen, holy people. (Exodus 19:5,6.) We do not understand that all Israel from the time of the giving of the Law could have been of the Heavenly Kingdom, however faithful they might have been. None could be of this Kingdom class before Jesus came to earth; for He was the Forerunner of this class. The offer was made to the Jews of His day. But those of the nation who lived previously, and who had been faithful to God, true to their Covenant, shall be greatly blessed of the Lord on the human plane. They shall be used to bless all nations under Spiritual Israel--the Kingdom of God now being set up.



God's special favor to the people of natural Israel in choosing them above any other nation was especially because they were the seed of His faithful friend, Abraham. God had promised Abraham that because of his faith and obedience his seed should be blessed. It was not because they were of themselves holier or better than other peoples. (See Exodus 32:9-13; Deuteronomy 9:4-8.) But for their fathers' sakes God chose them to be His people.

At our Lord's First Advent the time had come for the offer of membership in the Kingdom, for the testing of the whole nation of Israel, to prove whether they were ready for this choice blessing. Jesus was the One to offer this Kingdom; for He had consecrated Himself a Sacrifice for sin, which would constitute a basis for the establishment of the Kingdom on earth.

#### TRUE AND FALSE IDEAS OF THE KINGDOM

The Sermon on the Mount, from which our text is taken, points out the earnestness and singleness of heart necessary in those who would become members of the Kingdom class. The Master intimates that not all of this favored nation who heard His Message would be ready to accept it. Many were absorbed in the things of this life--in what they would eat, what they would drink, what they would wear. But in order to be ready to receive the proffered blessing, in order to be acceptable to God, they must make the Kingdom their first interest. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," enjoined the Savior, not the earthly things. If the Kingdom was made first, all their earthly needs would be supplied; "All these things shall be added unto you," was His promise.

Not many of the Jews were ready for so drastic a Teacher. They had their own plans--business plans, political plans, social functions. Hence this invitation of Jesus to leave all to obtain a Kingdom of which they knew nothing and which seemed so intangible did not find a very ready response. The twelve Apostles were among the first to accept His offer. At the time of Jesus' death, something over five hundred had joined themselves to Him as His disciples. Of these we are told that one hundred and twenty were gathered in the upper room on the day of Pentecost, where they received the begetting of the Holy Spirit. After Pentecost some thousands of Jews came to

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the point of decision to make the Kingdom of God their first business. These, however, were but a small minority of the nation of Israel.

Throughout this Gospel Age there have been a few who have heard the Call and accepted the conditions, who have determined to make the Kingdom of God the first consideration of their lives. Satan has tried to make many of these think that papacy is that Kingdom, or that Great Britain or Russia or some one of the other kingdoms of

earth is that Kingdom. To others he brought a misinterpretation of the words of the Apostle, "The Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit," and endeavored to make them think that all there was of the Kingdom of God was merely righteousness and holiness of life, living a godly life through the power of the Lord's Spirit. How far all this is from the teaching of the Scriptures regarding the Kingdom can be readily seen by a study of the subject of the Kingdom of God as presented by the Holy Prophets, the Apostles and our Lord Jesus Himself. Truly we have a wily Adversary!

#### HOW CHRISTIANS MAY KEEP GOD'S LAW

By these false ideas the true thought of the Kingdom was obscured--the thought that God was selecting the members of the Kingdom class, the thought that we not only make a full consecration of our little all to the Lord according to His terms, but that we should continually put this vow of consecration into practice, counting all other things as loss and dross that we might win a membership in this glorious company of which Jesus is the Head. This obscuration of mind still continues with the majority of those who have professed the name of Christ; but the full complement of Body members of Christ is being secured, despite Satan's vigorous efforts to prevent it. Now the number is almost full; indeed the few now coming in, we believe, are merely taking the places vacated by some who by unfaithfulness have lost the crown laid up for them; for we understand that the full number had accepted the offer and been begotten of the Spirit when the general Call ceased, in the fall of 1881. See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. III., Chap. 6--"The Work of the Harvest."

In seeking the Kingdom of God we as Gentiles are to realize that the Lord has not changed from His original

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position held when He made the proposition to Israel that in order to obtain everlasting life they must keep the Law. There is no other way. God will not exalt to Kingdom honors any who are violators of His Law. The question then comes in, How can we keep the Law? If the Jews could not keep it in all those sixteen hundred years, how could we keep it? And does not the Lord say through the Apostle that by the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in His sight? To understand this is to understand some of the deep things of God; namely, that "God is in Christ reconciling the world [those from the world who now accept the Gospel Call] unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."--2 Corinthians 5:19.

#### "YOUR BODIES MEMBERS OF CHRIST"

Christ kept the Law and satisfied Divine Justice for all who become His during the Gospel Age; and His

merit is imputed to those who keep the Law in their heart and are hindered from keeping it absolutely by the weaknesses of their fallen flesh which they are unable to control. And so St. Paul says that the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. First of all, through the imputation of His merit to their mortal bodies, their flesh, our Redeemer covers their natural imperfections. Second, because that body so devoted, so justified, is sacrificed, He reckons them dead as human beings. They are then begotten to a new, a spirit nature. Thenceforth their mortal body is counted as the body of the New Creature, no longer as a human body; for this was sacrificed. Actually, however, it is quickened to be the servant of the New Creature. Being still actually human, it must be given a robe of righteousness to wear until the end of the present life. This is furnished by our Savior.

The Apostle Paul, in speaking of our human bodies from the standpoint of our new relationship in Christ Jesus, says, "Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?" (1 Corinthians 6:15.) God no longer counts our fleshly body as the body of a human being. It is a member of Christ, the property of the spiritual New Creature. This New Creature keeps the Law of God. Wherein there is failure, it is not the New Creature that fails, but the imperfect flesh, which is covered by the pure, white robe of Christ's righteousness. God looks upon it as the spotless body of this New Creature. Thus we stand perfect before God's Law; thus the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who are walking, not according to the flesh, but in the footsteps of Jesus.

#### LIBERTY IN CHRIST NOT THAT OF MEAT AND DRINK

Our text enjoins that we seek God's righteousness. This seems to imply that for those He is now calling God has provided a righteousness. This righteousness is in Christ, and it must be accepted by every one who comes to God; otherwise, not having the righteousness of God and the assistance that goes with it, he will not be able to attain unto the Kingdom.

The New Creature is so in accord with the Lord that he will seek to bring his mortal body fully under the control of the Law of Love. He will seek to be altogether just toward his fellowmen, toward the brethren, and kind and merciful toward all. His entire life will be given up to attaining membership in the Heavenly Kingdom. This will lead him to serve the cause of God's righteousness. Wherever God's plans are set aside, he would be called upon to defend them in every reasonable way. He will be on the side of righteousness and truth. All who truly seek the Kingdom have this disposition.

When the Apostle Paul says that the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, we are to understand him to mean, as shown in the context, that the privileges of those who are

of this Kingdom class do not consist merely in liberty to eat and drink things forbidden to those under the Law or to those in bondage to heathen superstitions, but our liberty is far superior to this. Those Jews who became followers of Christ were informed that they were now free from the regulations of the Law which restricted their food, etc. As to whether they would now eat pork or something else was thereafter to be regulated by conditions and circumstances. They had liberty in Christ that they had not, as Jews, previously enjoyed.

But St. Paul points out that this is not the chief liberty--to be able to eat oysters, pork and other things forbidden by the Law. This permission would not be much of a blessing. The chief element of their freedom in Christ was that true righteousness and holiness which is the blessing and comfort of all those who are the sons of God. Nor was it the Apostle's thought that righteousness, peace and joy constitute the Kingdom, but that these are the blessed results of membership in the Kingdom class. They are blessings which are the heritage of those who are heirs of the Kingdom, even while they are still under age, as it were, still being tutored and prepared for Kingdom service beyond the veil. All of the Lord's people are now to rejoice in true righteousness, the righteousness of God, and to seek it above all else.

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#### ST. PAUL AT ATHENS

--JULY 16.--ACTS 17:16-34.--

ATHENS THE INTELLECTUAL CENTER OF THE OLD WORLD--IMAGES  
OF THEIR GODS EVERYWHERE--PREACHING IN THE PARTHENON--  
THE ESSENCE OF THE APOSTLE'S DISCOURSE--  
THE BASIC DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GREEK PHILOSOPHY AND  
THE SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS--THE TRUTH REJECTED BY  
THE WORDLY-WISE--GREEK PHILOSOPHY STILL HOLDS  
SWAY OVER THE MULTITUDE--ONLY A FEW BELIEVE  
THE TRUTH.

"In Him we live and move and have our being."--Verse 28.

WHILE Silas remained with the Bereans to strengthen and establish them, as Timothy had remained at Thessalonica and Luke at Philippi, St. Paul went on alone to Athens, then the center of the world's culture, intelligence and wisdom. It was a college city, where resided the most eminent philosophers of the world, as instructors in its great colleges, to which came the world's brightest and ablest thinkers. Athens boasted that during one century of its intellectual dominance

it had sent forth more intellectual giants than all the rest of the world had supplied for five centuries. Jerusalem had been the center of true religion; Rome was the center of the world's imperial authority; and Athens was the world's intellectual capital.

We can imagine St. Paul walking through the streets of that great city, admiring its architecture--the most wonderful in the world--listening to some of the scientific teachers of that day, and noting the numerous monuments with which the city was fairly crowded. Pliny, the historian, declares that about this time Athens contained more than three thousand public statues and a countless number of lesser images in private houses. He notes the

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fact that in one street there stood before every house a square pillar supporting a bust of the god Hermes. Every gateway and every post carried its protecting god. Every street had its sanctuary.

No wonder we read that the Apostle's heart was stirred within him as he beheld so intelligent a city wholly given over to idolatry, apparently ignorant of the true God! The longing seized him to tell these worldly-wise men about the great Creator and His Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. As usual, he found the Jewish synagogue; and there he reasoned with the Jews and with devout persons. Moreover, he talked daily in the market places with all who were willing. Our translation says that he disputed; but scholars generally admit that this word does not well represent the thought of the original, which rather signifies conversed or reasoned. Disputes, in the ordinary sense of the word, are of little value and accomplish little or no good.

Some called the Apostle a babbler, implying that there was neither reason nor sense in his presentations. Others thought more favorably, and were curious to have a formal discourse. So in the Lord's providence the way was opened for St. Paul to deliver a discourse on the Plan of the Ages amongst the wise men of the earth on Mars Hill, probably in the great structure known as the Parthenon. This must have seemed a favorable opening to the Apostle--to find intelligent people really inquiring about the Gospel which he was proclaiming. However, the curiosity of the Athenians, like that of some of the worldly today, was superficial. They wished to keep abreast of every new theory, particularly that they might the better defend their own position, to which they were already committed.

#### THE ATHENIANS TOO RELIGIOUS

Our Common Version reports the Apostle to have begun his discourse by accusing his hearers of being too superstitious. However true the statement might have been, it would have been an unwise one; for it would have needlessly prejudiced and offended his hearers from the

outstart. We do well, therefore, to translate the word by the phrase too religious, instead of too superstitious.

The Apostle proceeds to show that by the images which they had erected they recognized innumerable gods, and that in addition he had seen one altar to the Unknown God. This was being overly religious in one sense of the word--unwisely so. Reason should have taught them what Revelation teaches us; namely, that there is but one living and true God. The mind that roams about and grasps many gods is truly over-religious and under-wise.

#### "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD"

The inscription on one of the altars, "To the unknown God," became the text of the Apostle's discourse. He preached the true God and Jesus Christ, whom God had sent. He showed Divine Justice and its requirements, which the fallen race of Adam are unable to meet. He demonstrated that thus all mankind are under condemnation as unworthy of life everlasting. He showed that God so loved the world that He sent His Son to be our Satisfaction-price, to redeem mankind from the condemnation of death and to grant them resurrection privileges. He explained that this true God was neither stone nor wood, nor were there any such representations of Him, but that "they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."--John 4:24.

The Apostle thus drew the attention of the Athenians to a greater God than they had ever thought of. He showed the length and the breadth of Divine love--that it was not confined to one nation or people, but that God had made "of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth," having determined the appointed season in which they should come to a knowledge of Himself, according to the place of their residence; for He desires that all should seek Him, and that, feeling after Him, they should find Him.

How true this is! To some of us the Lord has revealed Himself, and has drawn us to a knowledge of Himself and to opportunities for still further knowledge and grace. Yet many are still in ignorance, His time or season for their being brought to a knowledge of the Truth having not yet fully arrived. He is being found out by those who desire to find Him--those who are out of accord with sin, those who are feeling after God with a desire to find Him. To this class alone does He appeal. How glad we are to know that after having gathered the Elect of this Gospel Age, He will ultimately cause every knee to bow and every tongue to confess, and will spread the knowledge of His glory to fill the whole earth!

The Apostle, in addressing philosophers, spoke from the standpoint of reason, instead of attempting to discuss the matter from the standpoint of Divine Revelation, as He would have done if he had been speaking to a congregation of Jews or of Christians. Thus to the Stoics and other learned men of Athens he became a philosopher,

in order that he might the better assist them to the true philosophy and the Plan of the Ages. For instance, had he been speaking to Jews or Christians he might have noted the fact that all out of Christ are out of Divine favor and under Divine condemnation; but in addressing these philosophers, he stated the truth from another standpoint. He called attention to the fact that in one sense of the word the entire human family are brethren, and all of them God's children, or offspring.

Note the logic of the argument. If humanity are the offspring of God, they should, as His children, resemble Him in some degree. This being true, gold, silver, and stone images must be very poor representations of the true God. Man himself, as the child or offspring of God, would better represent Him, especially in the higher elements of character.

#### "THIS IGNORANCE GOD WINKED AT"

St. Paul anticipated the questions of his hearers-- "Why do you come here now to tell us of this God? If He is our Creator, and if we are His children, why did He not send us a message long ago? Are we responsible for not worshipping Him, when we knew Him not?" The Apostle's answer was, You are not responsible up to the present time. Such ignorance and idolatry "God winked at"--let go unnoticed; for until now His great Plan had not reached that stage of development which authorized the sending of the Message to you. Now God has sent the Message to you. He commands all men everywhere to repent--of sins, of unrighteousness--and to come back into harmony with Himself.

The question may be asked, "Why tell men to repent at that time any more than previously?" We answer, The Apostle explains why, by saying that NOW God commands all men everywhere to repent because He has appointed another Day of Judgment. In the first judgment Adam was on trial. He was found unworthy of everlasting life, and was sentenced to death. His entire race has shared in his death penalty. But now, in due time, Christ died to redeem Adam and his race from that death sentence, and thus opened the way for the appointment of another Day of Judgment, of trial for life or death everlasting.

This second trial, or Day of Judgment, would not be merely for those who would be living at the time, but

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would have to do with all the race--every nation, people, kindred and tongue--"all men everywhere." This would imply an awakening of the dead. Otherwise the millions who have already died could never have God's grace and could never have an opportunity for participation in it. The proof that all this was God's purpose, and that He was able to raise the dead--St. Paul points out as already

demonstrated by the fact that the One who had died to redeem the race had arisen from the dead, and in due time would be prepared to carry out all the provisions of the Divine Plan in dealing not only with the living, but with the dead members of the race, and giving to all a gracious opportunity for eternal life. Moreover, this blessed opportunity was now presented to those who heard.

#### SOME MOCKED AT THE RESURRECTION

No other religion than that of the Bible teaches a resurrection of the dead. All other religions teach that death is only a deception--that when men die, they really become more alive than before death; that when they lose all consciousness, they really become more intelligent than formerly. Only the Bible teaches in accord with the voice of our senses that the dead are DEAD and "know not anything." Only the Bible teaches that a future life is dependent upon the resurrection of the dead.

Only the Bible teaches that the redemption of the dead is dependent upon the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Only the Bible teaches that the Redeemer must come again the second time--not to suffer again, not as a man again, but as the Lord of life and glory on the spirit plane to change His elect Bride to His own nature, to associate her with Himself in His Kingdom glory, and to establish amongst men the Reign of Righteousness long promised, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven."

The philosophers of that day at Athens, like the philosophers of our day and of every epoch, sneered at the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. Some of them denied a future life entirely. Others held that human life persists and is indestructible. All were in opposition to the Bible teaching of a sentence of death, of a redemption by death and of a resurrection from death. All interest in the Apostle's teaching vanished for the majority when they learned that the entire philosophy rested upon the resurrection of the dead.

To the worldly mind nothing seems so irrational and so unreasonable as this feature of the Christian religion. Today this doctrine of the resurrection is proving to be a test to many. Few can receive it. Yet all who do not receive it are very certain to stumble into some of the pitfalls of error which the Adversary is permitted to arrange now for all who reject the counsel of God.

#### NOT MANY GREAT OR WISE

Nevertheless the Apostle's mission was not in vain; for we read that "certain men clave unto him." The Truth is a magnet which has a drawing power upon hearts of a certain character. The Apostle did not expect to convert many of those philosophers. He knew that not many wise, rich, great or learned according to the course of this world could come in amongst those whom the Lord



is now calling to constitute the Bride of Christ. (1 Corinthians 1:26-29.) He knew that their time to hear would be during the Millennium--in that Day of Judgment, or trial, of which he had been telling the philosophers. Some of those who declined to hear further said, "We may hear you again on this matter." But if the Truth did not appeal to them at once, it is quite doubtful whether the same Message would do so later.

Does not this principle hold true today? Is it not still true that the Lord is seeking a Little Flock only? Is it not still true that acceptance of the Truth indicates those who are drawn to the Lord and guided by His Holy Spirit? Is it not still true that inability to see the beauty and the force of the Truth is an indication of unworthiness of it?

Let us be content, if possible, to find and to bless with the Truth those whom the Lord our God has called and drawn. Let us be content to leave the others for His due time (1 Timothy 2:5,6), after we have put the Truth before them. The condemnation of death will continue upon all except the Household of Faith until the time for the establishment of the great Kingdom. Then Natural Israel will be blessed under the terms of the New Covenant, the blood for the sealing of which--the blood of Christ--is during this Age being prepared in the sufferings of the Head, in which the Body is permitted to share. (Col. 1:24.) Then, under the provisions of that New Law Covenant, the blind eyes of Israel shall be opened and their deaf ears unstopped, and reconciliation be made complete for them, and for the world through them.

Evidently this privilege of reconciliation will be open to all the world of mankind who, by becoming proselytes, may share the blessings of that New Covenant with Israel. And how glorious will be our privilege--if we are found faithful--to be sharers with our Lord in putting that New Covenant into execution and, as its Mediator, blessing Israel and the world!

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#### GOOD, BETTER, BEST IN BIBLE STUDY

EVERY influence which makes for respect for the Bible as the Word of God is commendable. The Bible Study practiced in Great Britain and Ireland fifty to a hundred years ago; namely, the committing to memory of verses and chapters and the use of the Book as a reader in the Schools, had its advantages. Those who thus became familiar with the text of the Bible had a valuable store of information, if later they became Christians and sought the meaning of God's Messages.

Other Bible Study attempts were made in various denominations in so-called Bible Study Classes. These,

however, were hampered by the denominational Creeds. Occasionally able teachers informed their Classes respecting the historical setting, discussed the writer of the Epistle, the journeying experiences, etc. Sometimes he ventured off into doctrine; but on such occasions, unless he was very discreet and held down the Class, the result of the lesson was somewhat of a dispute and a general tangle, which left the Class more confused than before.

Another style of Bible Study which for a time found favor, consisted of a number of Christian people reading a chapter, verse about. Each, after reading his verse, would make such comment as he pleased. If there were forty verses in the chapter there were as many little comments. When the meeting closed there was a feeling of a measure of refreshment in having handled the Bible, having read some interesting verses, and having communed

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with each other; but very little knowledge of God or His Plan of the Ages was gained by such Bible Study.

It is only of late--within the past ten years practically--that the Bible has been studied after the manner we mention as Berean Studies--searching the Scriptures. Now all over the world Berean Classes are in operation. Great blessing and great enlightenment are resulting.

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For this kind of Bible Study, a textbook is used and also a question-book. The textbooks are the various volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. In these volumes the teachings of the Bible have been collated and brought into an assimilable form. For instance, if the lesson appertains to the Holy Spirit, the study on the subject brings together the teachings of the Bible from every part and sets these in orderly array before the Class. If the subject be "The Man Christ Jesus," it is similarly treated. If the subject be "The Logos," it is treated in like manner. If the subject be "Justification," "Sanctification," "The Glorification of the Saints," each subject is treated systematically--brought to the minds of the Class and laid open for discussion, with references to various parts of the Bible in which these things are stated.

It does not surprise us, therefore, that those of God's people who have learned the value of this method of Bible Study and who follow it have a clearer understanding of the Word of God than others. While, therefore, we commend any kind of Bible Study, we especially commend this form which the Lord has blessed above all others for the enlightenment of His people in this Harvest time. This method is for the advantage of the entire Class. An able leader is not so indispensable. One danger with able leaders with any other method of Bible Study is that their ability sometimes goes in a wrong direction and misleads.

These Berean Studies, however, place the entire Class in a position of advanced scholarship in the Word of God, because they have the entire subject under discussion open before them. Nevertheless, even in a Berean Study and when the questions are used, a skilful leader, who is humble-minded, will prove a great assistance to the Brethren. And this is the case in nearly every Class the world around. We want the dear readers of THE WATCH TOWER to know just why we so earnestly recommend to them this Berean form of Bible Study. Nor should we wonder if the Adversary would work against a method which has been so blessed of the Lord. We urge upon all a comparison between the results in their minds, their hearts, their lives, as between Berean Bible Studies and all other kinds of which they may have knowledge or have tried in the past.

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#### ST. PAUL AT CORINTH

--JULY 23.--ACTS 18:1-11.--

LESSONS FROM ST. PAUL'S EXPERIENCES--CORINTH A BETTER FIELD FOR THE GOSPEL THAN WAS ATHENS--AS USUAL, THE MESSAGE WAS OPPOSED AND BLASPHEMED BY THOSE WHO PREFERRED "THE TRADITIONS OF THE ELDERS"--ARRIVAL OF SILAS AND TIMOTHY--ST. PAUL ENCOURAGED AND COMFORTED.

"Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace."--Verse 9.

ATHENS did not prove to be a very successful field for the Apostle Paul's labors. He quickly perceived that, although its citizens were chiefly engaged in hearing new things and in philosophizing on every subject, nevertheless the tendency of science and philosophy, falsely so-called, occupied their attention and so satisfied their minds that they were not as ready for the Truth as were some others less highly educated and less philosophical. The Apostle's experience in this respect coincides with that of all who in sincerity preach the Gospel of Christ stripped of all human invention and philosophy, and also illustrates his declaration that God does not choose many wise or great or learned, according to this world's standard, but chiefly the poor of this world--poor socially, philosophically and financially--to be the heirs of the Kingdom; for this class is more inclined to receive the faith and to become rich therein.

Leaving Athens, St. Paul journeyed about forty miles to Corinth, a prominent commercial city of Greece, noted for its manufactures, architecture, paintings, bronzes, etc.

It was much less moral than was Athens, much less refined, but nevertheless a better field for the Gospel.

Where religious forms and ceremonies become popular, they are apt to have correspondingly the less weight and force. But where sin, immorality and irreligion are popular, those minds which have a religious trend are apt to be more free, more open for the Truth. Unsatisfied by formalism, this class more keenly recognize righteousness because of its sharp contrast with the sin abounding.

Similarly today, the Truth is likely to receive a cooler reception amongst those whose religious sensibilities are to some extent satisfied by forms and ceremonies. The heart most ready for the Truth is the one which is not satiated and stupefied with religious formalism, but which realizes to some extent the exceeding sinfulness of sin and longs for the righteousness which is of God. Like the Apostle, we are to discern the most fruitful fields and to spend our energy upon them, leaving the other fields for a more convenient season, whether it shall come during the present Age or during the Millennium.

#### LESSONS FROM ST. PAUL'S EXPERIENCES

Apparently the Apostle was considerably cast down at this time. His first letter to the Corinthian Church, written later on, clearly implies his discouragement and possible sickness. He wrote, "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling." His rough experiences at Philippi, his small success at Athens, the slenderness of his purse and his need of fellowship--all contributed to make him downcast; and he informs us that the Lord encouraged him with a vision.

Soon after his arrival at Corinth St. Paul found Aquila and Priscilla his wife. They were tent-makers; and this being the Apostle's trade, he abode with them and labored. It was customary at that time that the sons of all the upper class of people should learn a trade, however well educated otherwise. St. Paul's trade stood him now in good place, enabling him to provide for his necessities while preaching the Gospel of Christ. From his own explanation of the matter we learn that even after a considerable number of believers had been gathered at Corinth as a Church, the Apostle maintained himself by his trade. His reason for so doing was not that it would have been a sin for him to receive money and support from the believers there, but that he hoped that the Gospel would commend itself the more to many if its chief expounder were seen to be laboring not for the meat which perisheth, nor for wealth, but preaching the Gospel without charge --laying down his life for the brethren.

Of this period the Apostle wrote to the Thessalonians, "Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you, in all our affliction and distress, by your faith." (1 Thessalonians 3:7.) Later, he wrote of his experience to the Corinthians, saying, "Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted,

and have no certain dwelling place, and labor, working with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted,

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we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."--1 Corinthians 4:11-13.

Many of us can find a lesson in St. Paul's experiences. If God permitted him to be in want, to be traduced, slandered, oppressed--if he needed such experiences in order to bring out the best that was in him and to make his epistles the more useful to the Church--possibly the Lord's dealings with us at times may be with the same end in view --our preparation for further usefulness in His service.

#### ST. PAUL "PRESSED IN SPIRIT"

Notwithstanding all of his discouragements and the fact that his tent-making labors barely sufficed to provide for him things decent and honorable, the Apostle never forgot that his chief mission in life was the preaching of the Gospel. If the earning of his daily bread hindered his preaching during the week he at least took his Sabbath days for the more important work whenever he could reach a congregation of the Jews. We read that he reasoned with them in the synagogue every Sabbath day.

But apparently he was under a measure of constraint and did not speak with his accustomed boldness and vigor, perhaps because of the lack of moral support, which is an important factor with all and an essential with many.

Finally Silas and Timothy arrived, bringing with them not only good fellowship and encouraging news from Berea, Thessalonica and Philippi, but also a gift, as the Apostle himself tells us--quite probably from Lydia, the seller of purple dyes, supposed to have been comfortably circumstanced. The effect of these encouragements is intimated. St. Paul "was pressed in spirit"--he felt a fresh vigor urging him to present his Message more zealously and to bring matters to a focus at the synagogue.

After testifying with great boldness and finding that his Message was repelled by the majority of the synagogue, the Apostle forced the crisis himself by shaking his garment as if he would not take from them even the dust, saying to those who had opposed and blasphemed, "Your blood be upon your own heads. I am clean. From henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."

There are times when positiveness is absolutely necessary, even though it cause a division amongst those who profess to serve the same God. There are times when much more good can be thus obtained than by a continuance under disadvantageous conditions. Oil and water will not mix; and time spent in trying to blend them is altogether wasted. When positive bitterness and hatred are manifested, as in the case under consideration, it is better to withdraw.

But neither the Apostle nor we would recognize as proper or at all allowable that the Lord's people should quarrel and take offense one with the other over trifles unworthy of consideration. The shaking off of the dust not only was what our Lord had suggested (Matthew 10:14), but was a custom of the time--a warning, as it were, that the Apostle felt that he had discharged his entire duty and now left the responsibility upon their own shoulders.

The effect was good in two ways: (1) It helped Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, to take a decided stand; whereas otherwise he might have been stunted in his spiritual development. Crispus decided for the Lord Jesus, and took his stand with the Apostle and a few others (2) The fact that the Jews had repudiated the Apostle and his Message would draw the attention of the Gentiles more particularly to his Gospel. Some of these Gentiles already believed. The new meetings were held in the home of Justus, a reverent man who resided near the synagogue. Thus as the Jews attended the synagogue worship they would be continually reminded of St. Paul's Message in the synagogue, which would be an incentive for them to enter the house of Justus and hear more respecting the fulfilment of the prophecies in Jesus.

#### ST. PAUL ENCOURAGED

The result was that a considerable number of the Corinthians believed and were baptized, thus symbolizing their consecration to do the will of the Lord. Thus we see that opposition is not necessarily an injurious thing to the Lord's Cause. On the contrary, it is safe to say that a most dangerous condition is stagnation.

Evidently the Lord saw that His servant Paul needed some special encouragement at this time. Hence another vision was granted, in which the Apostle was told, "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee, for I have much people in this city."

What an insight this incident gives us as to the Divine supervision of the Gospel Message and its servants! How these words remind us of the promise that the Lord will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, but will with every temptation provide also a way of escape! (1 Corinthians 10:13.) That vision and its message, we may be sure, were not for the Apostle merely, but for all the Lord's people from that time until now. The same God is rich unto all that call upon Him, and able both to shield and to deliver all of His servants. Therefore He will permit only such experiences as His infinite Wisdom sees will be advantageous to His Cause and will work out for His servants a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The Lord's statement that He had much people in Corinth teaches us a lesson also. It shows that the Lord knows the hearts of all, and that He has a care not only

for His saints, but also for those who have not yet heard His message, but whose hearts are in a favorable attitude of honesty, sincerity. A further lesson comes to us in this connection: We are to remember that the Lord is His Own Superintendent of Missions, and that He is able to guide His consecrated servants, not only as to direction and place of service, but also as respects the time they shall remain to accomplish His will and as respects the character of the experiences necessary for them in order best to accomplish His purposes.

The more firmly our faith can grasp this situation, the more we can rely upon the Lord and use His wisdom instead of our own, the more successful shall we be as His servants, and the more happy and contented; for we shall realize that all things are working together for good to all who are His, to all submitted to His guiding care.

#### EIGHTEEN MONTHS OF TEACHING

Corinth was nicknamed the Vanity Fair of the World; for it was a center of frivolity, pleasure-seeking, etc. It is said to have been one of the most licentious and profligate cities of its day. At first the thought may seem very strange to us that this vilest of the great cities should yield larger spiritual results than did any other, so much so that the Lord would especially declare that He had "much people" there, and would providentially detain His ambassador there for a year and a half, while in other places he had been permitted to remain only a few days or weeks.

The philosophy of the matter seems to be this: Outward morality frequently leads to a pharisaical spirit of self-righteousness, which is a most pernicious and deadly foe to true righteousness. On the other hand, where sin stands out glaringly it has a repulsive effect upon the pure in heart, upon all who love righteousness; and this repulsion

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from the evil seems to prepare such hearts the better for a genuine consecration to the Lord and to enable them to receive His Message. This theory holds good, at least in the missionary work at Corinth, as in contrast with that of places much more respectable in reputation.

The lesson for us in this connection is that we should ever be on guard in our own hearts against this self-righteous spirit of outward observance, which lacks true holiness, true sanctification. It is along this line that our Lord found fault with one of the seven Churches, saying, "Because thou art lukewarm, I will spew thee out of My mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." (Revelation 3:16,17.) This is our Lord's charge against the present state of the nominal church--so rich in earthly advantages, so self-satisfied. Let us be on guard lest in any manner or to any degree such a lukewarmness

should come over us and we should lose the  
Divine favor.

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## GLORYING IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST

--JULY 30.--1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-2:2.--

THE CROSS OF CHRIST NO LONGER PREACHED--REDEMPTION  
DOCTRINE FALLING BEFORE EVOLUTION THEORY--THESE TWO  
THEORIES ANTAGONISTIC--FEW UNDER THE BANNER OF  
THE CROSS WITH JESUS AND THE APOSTLES.

"Far be it from me to glory, save in the Cross  
of our Lord Jesus Christ."--Galatians 6:14.

ONE can dispute that the preaching of the  
Cross of Christ is dying out. Those who  
still preach it give the impression that at  
the most it means renouncement of sin and  
the incidental self-denials. Rare indeed  
would it be to find a minister in our day  
preaching the necessity for the Cross of  
Christ--the necessity for Jesus' death as the  
Redemption-price for the sins of the world.  
--1 Timothy 2:5,6; Matthew 20:28.

Why is this? Some would answer that they have become  
Christian Scientists, and no longer believe that there  
is such a thing as sin, and no longer believe that there is  
such a thing as death; and that hence they could not believe  
that Jesus died for sin. Others would answer that  
they have gotten too wise to believe any longer that in the  
Divine Plan the death of Jesus was necessary for human  
redemption and reconciliation to the Father. Their view  
is that the Apostles and Jesus, in setting forth the Cross,  
were laboring under the delusion of the darker time,  
which present-day education shatters under a brighter  
light. Still others would say that they have become  
Evolutionists and Higher Critics, that they no longer believe  
the Bible at all, and that they adopt the opposite  
theory to that of the Bible--namely, the Evolution theory.

From the standpoint of Evolution there could be no  
justice, no propriety of any kind, in a Ransom-sacrifice  
by a Redeemer. Why? Because, according to the Evolution  
theory, man is merely developing, and is not yet perfect  
and not yet ready for trial along perfect lines; he is  
merely merging from a brute to an intelligent creature.  
Evolutionists would claim that without any redemption  
or any interference whatever upon God's part the process  
of Evolution will continue until by and by there will be a  
family of mankind that will reach an aristocracy of wisdom,  
efficiency and power which will enable them to live  
everlastingly by their own wits.



Small comfort is there in this for Evolutionists of today or of the past. If they boast of their children of the future and of the everlasting life to which those children will be gradually evolved, they admit that personally they have nothing beyond the tomb--that any future life on their part will be representatively in their children. And as for their parentage, they have nothing to boast of there, although some of them seem to boast of their ancestry, after all--that their forefathers were monkeys, frogs and, earliest of all, simply protoplasm.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CROSS

These theories are the products of human wisdom, and indicate a misunderstanding and neglect of God's Word. How beautiful is the Gospel of the Cross as compared with any other! It assures us that God made man in His own image and likeness; and that man's fall from that perfection to his present condition of demoralization came as a result of disobedience to Divine Law and of the enforcement of the Divine penalty--"Dying, thou shalt die." (Genesis 2:17, margin.) For six thousand years our race has been dying, not only physically, but also mentally, which includes the moral qualities. With all the experiences of the past and with all the education of the present, nobody has hope that our race can be lifted up out of its present unsatisfactory condition back to perfection. All that we can do is to combat the evil in ourselves, combat disease and death, and help others along the same lines.

But meantime, God had from the very beginning planned the blessings of the Cross--planned that in due time He would send forth His Son, who would die for human sin, "The Just for the unjust," and thus open up the way for man's return to Divine favor and everlasting life. Thus it is written: "As by a man came death, by a man comes also the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive--every man in his own order."--1 Corinthians 15:21-23.

For four thousand years the world waited for the redemption accomplished at Calvary. For nearly two thousand years the results of that redemption have been confined to a special class of humanity, under a special call, or invitation, to be the Bride of Christ--"the Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven." (Hebrews 12:23.) The Scriptures assure us that this selected company is to be associated with Jesus in the great Kingdom of God, which the Bible everywhere shows is to roll away the curse and, instead, bring back favor.

The Kingdom cannot come until the Royal Family is ready to take the Throne. Jesus, indeed, has long been ready; but in harmony with the Father's Plan He has waited and has been doing a work in the preparation of the Church, His brethren, who are to be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom--otherwise styled "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife." (Romans 8:17; Revelation 21:9,10.) Then for a thousand years the Restitution privileges will be open to

the whole world of mankind. It will no longer be necessary to preach; for all will know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest, and unto Him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. (Jeremiah 31:34; Philippians 2:9-11.) All this is to come as a result of the Cross.

#### EARTHLY VS. HEAVENLY WISDOM

No wonder the Apostle makes the Cross of Christ the center of his preaching, declaring: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission" of sins! (Hebrews 9:22.)

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As the Prophet hath declared, "By His stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5.) Our lesson quotes briefly the Divine prophecy that the worldly-wise would not appreciate the Divine Plan, and especially the center of that Plan--

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the Cross of Christ. Worldly wisdom would look in an entirely different direction.

However, God is not seeking the worldly-wise, but those loving righteousness, full of faith and obedience. Hence the majority of mankind, including the majority of the wise, are still to be found on the side of the world; and only comparatively few have come properly and truly to the Lord's side, accepting the Wisdom from Above. These, in the eyes of the world, are foolish; but in the eyes of the Lord, they are wise. The wise, the great, the noble, the rich, the learned, are so well satisfied with what they have that they are not hungering nor thirsting, nor seeking after the Divine arrangement. Hence those who accept the Lord's arrangement are usually the poor, the unlearned, etc., who realize their lack of wisdom and seek it from the Fountain of Wisdom and through the channel of Wisdom--the Bible.

The whole world is perishing because of Original Sin; and to nearly all of the world the Cross of Christ is foolishness. We who believe God's Message are said to be saved--to have passed from death unto life--because we have come into relationship with the great Life-giver "through faith in His blood." To us the great Redeemer is the Wisdom of God personified, and that Wisdom is shown in the Master's course in sacrifice. When we accept this, He becomes our Justifier; and being justified by Him, we are granted access to the Father, who receives our consecration sacrifices, and imparts to us a begetting of His Holy Spirit. Our salvation continues as day by day we abide in the Lord and grow in grace, knowledge and the Holy Spirit. Eventually our salvation will be completed; as it is written, our salvation shall be brought unto us at the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.--1 Peter 1:13; Titus 2:13.

When the Royal Priesthood shall have entered into

the Heavenly glory, then will begin the New Dispensation of Messiah's Kingdom, which will utterly scatter the errors of worldly wisdom and cause all the world of mankind to hear "the still, small Voice" of God. The Lord will then turn to the people a pure Message, that they may all call upon Him and serve Him with one consent. (Zephaniah 3:8,9.) Then, during the Millennium, will be the world's trial time; as now, during this Gospel Age, is the Church's day of trial, testing and preparation for the fulness of Jehovah's favor and for everlasting life.

With such an appreciation of the value and the necessity of the Cross of Christ, we can join heartily with the Apostle Paul in the Golden Text of this lesson: "Far be it from me to glory, save in the Cross of Christ."

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#### LESSON OF THE BLIGHTED FIG TREE

"Have faith in God."--Mark 11:22.

AS JESUS and His Apostles passed along the road from Bethany to Jerusalem preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, they had seen, en route, a fig tree. Our Lord, being hungry, went to the tree, seeking fruit thereon; for the time of figs was not yet past. But He found that the tree was barren. Then He pronounced a curse, a blight, upon the tree. The next day as they passed by, Jesus' disciples noticed that the fig tree had withered from the roots. Then Peter said, "Master, behold, the fig tree which Thou cursedst is withered away!" Jesus answered, "Have faith in God." (Mark 11:13,14,20-22.) Then He called their attention to the fact that it was not merely Himself who had blighted the tree, but that the Heavenly Father was to be recognized as behind Him in this. He ascribed always the honor to the Father. He was merely the Finger of God. "The works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me." "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works."--John 5:36; 14:10.

#### REAL OBJECT OF JESUS' MIRACULOUS WORKS

Some of the people of that time, as now, had malignant power; and Jesus' act might have been attributed to that source. So He would direct the minds of His disciples to the things that He did as being always of God--thus differentiating His power from that of Satan. Some might wonder that God would take notice of a tree because it was not bearing fruit. But Jesus was not an

ordinary person. His course was not an example for us to go along the street and, seeing an unfruitful tree, say, "Cursed be this tree; it shall not bear any more fruit forever!" Should we adopt this course, we might be finding fault with trees and with everything else. But our Lord was especially sent of God. He was accustomed to do good as He went about. He healed the people and taught them, giving them forceful object lessons.

It was necessary that the disciples of Jesus be thoroughly convinced that He was sent of God before they could have developed in them the needful faith. They must continue this faith, consecrating their hearts and lives to God, before they would be ready for the Pentecostal blessing. Hence many of our Lord's works were of an outward, visible kind, intended for the enlightenment of His followers, for the establishment of His Messiahship, and for the manifestation of His future work for the world. Of His conversion of the water into wine, it is written, "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His [coming] glory; and His disciples believed on Him."--John 2:11.

St. Paul points out that the natural man cannot see the deep things of God because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 2:14.) Hence there was a necessity for teaching of this outward, material kind to Jesus' disciples; for they were but natural men. Although they recognized Him as the Messiah, they did not realize this clearly at first. Jesus asked them on one occasion, "Whom say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter answered. "Thou art The Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona! for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven." (Matthew 16:15-17.) It was a grand course of education, then, that Jesus gave His Apostles.

And so as regarded the fig tree, the miracles of healing the sick, raising the dead, casting out demons, feeding the thousands, etc., it was not so important that certain persons be physically healed at that time, nor so important that the multitudes should not go hungry over night, nor that Divine displeasure should be visited upon an unintelligent tree. But it was important that the disciples should get the needed lessons and see that the Lord's power could and would be exercised on their behalf; that, with the realization that the Lord was on their side and would guide and protect them, they would be able to exercise great confidence. It was important also that we should have this assurance of our Father's love and care over us as His children. It was important that our Lord's coming glory during His Kingdom Reign should be illustrated and shown forth.

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#### THE FIG TREE A SYMBOL

There is a further thought as regards the fig tree. We

believe that the fig tree is a representation of the Jewish nation. This nation had been God's fig tree. In due time God sent His Son seeking fruit from that nation, but He found none. The tree was barren. He found a few faithful individuals, but nationally nothing--no fruit as a nation; and the blight, or curse, of the Lord came upon the Jewish nation because with all their privileges and advantages they had not brought forth the proper fruits. Our Lord Jesus, five days before His crucifixion, pronounced their House desolate. "Behold, your House is left unto you desolate!"--Matt. 23:38,39; Luke 13:34,35.

Ever since that time, the Jews have been desolate and blighted as a nation. But there is a promise that this blighted fig tree shall again become a living tree--a living nation. They are to be restored to Divine favor, after their "double" of disfavor has been fulfilled. [See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 2, pp. 217-230.] This "double" we understand has been accomplished, and this is the meaning of the great awakening now among the Jews, and of the great Zionist movement.

Speaking of the time of His Second Advent and of the nearness then of the Kingdom, Jesus said, "Learn a parable of the fig tree: When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near; so ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors." (Mark 13:28,29.) The Jewish nation has been having a long winter time. But the spring time of this nation is now at hand. We already see this fig tree putting forth leaves. So we see that the lesson of the blighted fig tree was not merely a lesson for an hour, but a lesson to all the Lord's people from that time even until now.

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#### LOVE IN THE CLASSES

"LOVE one another, as I have loved you," is the Master's instruction. (John 15:12.) "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren," writes the Apostle. (1 John 3:16.) "He that loveth Him that begat, loveth also him that is begotten of the Father." (1 John 5:1.) As a matter of fact, all who belong to the Church of Christ have the spirit of love at the time of their spirit-begetting. And if progress be made in preparation for the Kingdom, that spirit of love will increase and abound more and more, until it will be perfected in the resurrection. Then we shall have our new bodies, which will permit our loving hearts to manifest themselves fully. But in the meantime, how frequently the dear brethren of the Lord seriously try each other, vex each other, and fail to provoke to love and good works--

inciting rather to strife!

While we should properly attribute such weakness, not to the New Creatures, but to the old, nevertheless we are never to forget that the growth of the New Creature means the death of the old creature, and hence in proportion as our flesh is not dead to sin and selfishness, in that same proportion we, as New Creatures, have not yet reached the ideal for which we strive.

The Editor frequently receives letters from Elders of Classes, asking advice as to how they shall deal with the Classes, and from members of the Classes asking how they should deal with their chosen Elders and Deacons. The chosen servants of the Classes frequently feel that their brethren, who elected them, do not repose a sufficiency of confidence in them and entrust them fully enough with the management of the affairs of the Class-- that the Class wishes to manage its own affairs and merely to have the advice of the Elders. In such cases we recommend that the Elders be fully content with such a condition-- that it is the Class as a whole which represents the Lord, and that no servant of the Class has the privilege of exceeding the authority which the Class gives to him by its vote.

It is our experience that the Bible Students feel a great need of protecting their rights and fulfilling the obligations which the Lord has placed upon them. Surely they are excusable even if they seem to exercise too great care in this matter--in view of the examples all around us, amongst both Protestants and Catholics, of the power of priestcraft, and the inclination of ecclesiastics to grasp power and authority and to ignore the Ecclesia.

On the other hand, frequently the Classes feel that they are being ridden or "bossed" by their Elders-- whether this is really so or not. They complain sometimes, for instance, that the Elders get a fever for preaching and desire to give lectures on every possible occasion, sometimes even turning prayer and testimony meetings and Berean Study classes into lecture opportunities. If intimations are given that Berean lessons are preferred, and that changes from the Class order are not appreciated, the Elders sometimes take offense with the whole Class, declaring that they are not appreciated; and other times they either take offense at the individual who has had the courage to kindly mention the matter to them or fancy that he is an exception and that they are pleasing the Class--a case of too much self-esteem sometimes.

#### PASTORAL ADVICE

It is difficult to know how to advise Classes in such cases where the Elders seem to have lost, not the Spirit of the Lord, but the proper balance of a sound mind. We generally refer inquirers to the extended treatise on the subject in *SCRIPTURE STUDIES*, Volume VI., and ask them to read afresh and act accordingly. But even after reading, some of the Lord's dear sheep do not know

how to obtain proper Scriptural order and maintain the liberties of the Class and refrain from permitting an Elder to injure himself and the interests of the Class!

Our general advice to the brethren is that they take such matters to the Lord in prayer, while watchful of any and every opportunity to promote what we believe to be the Lord's will in the Classes. On the one hand, we must admit that it would be entirely wrong for a Class to permit an elder to "boss" it or, as St. Peter said, "to Lord it over God's heritage." (1 Peter 5:3.) It would be injurious both to the Elder and to the Class interests.

On the other hand, the Classes should seek to avoid captiousness and faultfinding. They should esteem the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of devotion, the knowledge of the Truth and talents for its presentation, wherever these are to be found, and should gladly help one another to opportunities for development in grace, knowledge and utterance--each according to the talents which the Lord has bestowed upon him and in harmony with the directions of the Lord's Word. Forbearance, one with another, a willingness to wash one another's feet, symbolically, and to esteem each other for all Christ-like qualities, should be cultivated.

While the will of the Class should be carefully sought by every Elder, and fully expressed by every Class in respect to all the order and arrangement of its affairs, nevertheless we should not be over-exacting in respect to

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how the will of the Class is expressed. In other words, we should consider what is satisfactory to the majority of the Class. Elders are not to be found fault with simply because the Class satisfaction has not been expressed in some special, particular manner. In other words, a minority of the Class should not feel at liberty to distract the Class and stir up strife simply because methods which the minority prefer have not been accurately followed. Each member of the Class has full liberty to express his conviction at opportune times--especially at election time; but he should be fully satisfied, after expressing his thought and preference, to abide by the preference of the majority, whether expressed positively or negatively.

#### JUSTICE FIRST--THEN LOVE

Let us, dear brethren, ever remember that while we are striving after Love and its bond of perfectness, nevertheless our own course of action should be squared first of all by absolute justice, and then love may add to that as much as it may please. For instance, at an election some brother may unwisely nominate, for some service of the Class, a brother who is not qualified for the position. We must not find fault with the brother, for he has his liberty of making the nomination and manifesting his unwisdom; but, on the other hand, we should not feel

bound by his suggestion, nor should we allow fear of offending the nominated brother to hinder us from expressing, by vote, what we understand to be the Lord's will in the matter. And if voted down by the Class, the nominated brother has no right to take offense, but should rather admire the courage of the brethren, as expressed in his rejection.

One thus rejected by a Class has no right to inquire either of the Class or of any member of it why they voted against him. That is their business and none of his. They merely exercised the right which they had according to their own conscience. It was a matter of justice. Love, in the sense of human sympathy, has no place in the deciding of such questions where the Word of the Lord lays down the rules to be followed by each member of the Ecclesia. A failure to recognize principles of justice--righteousness--seems to lie at the foundation of nearly all Class difficulties. We request that all who get into such troubles take the matter to the Lord in prayer and then consider the matter along the lines of absolute justice.

We have advocated in the Sixth Volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES that, if possible, the will of the Class be expressed by the majority--at least eighty-five per cent of the whole number. This, however, does not mean that either justice or love would turn over all of the affairs of the Class to the remaining fifteen per cent and allow them to dictate, as for instance, to permit them to determine that there shall be no Elders or Deacons elected because the minority would hold fifteen per cent of the whole amount and insist that its ideals should be met or that the whole work of the Class should come to a standstill. This would neither be loving nor just, and should not be submitted to.

The majority rule is the standard of justice, and what we suggested in excess of that was a concession of love--an attempt to meet the tastes and preferences, if possible, of the entire Class, or at least a large majority of the Class. The majority should lovingly desire to regulate the Class affairs, so far as possible, to suit every member of the Class; and to whatever extent there is a failure to do this there is an invitation to discord and to a split in the Class. While, of course, a division of the interest into two Classes is always deplorable and should be striven against, and sacrifices be made by all to maintain a "unity of spirit in the bond of peace," nevertheless a division of the Class for a time would certainly be preferable to a continual strife, which would hinder the spiritual progress of all concerned.

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A LETTER has just been received from Wellington, New Zealand, saying that one of the Bible Students of that vicinity, fourteen years old, had been imprisoned for refusing to register for military service because of religious objection to participation in war in any sense of the word. He was permitted to come out of his prison to partake of the Memorial Supper, April 16th, and then returned

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to prison. It seems very remarkable the hold that militarism is gaining on the whole world.

Word comes to us from England that some of the Bible Students there were ordered to report for military duty. These registered their objection, but were refused immunity from service--receiving, however, the assurance that they would be put in non-combatant positions in the war. This promise was afterward neglected, and they were put into regular service at once. We are not to forget that practically all the world is claiming to be Christ's Kingdom, and yet that any who seek to follow the Words of Jesus seem to be thoroughly disrespected and hated of all men and all nations. What a proof we have here that Messiah's Kingdom is future! How glad we are that it is nigh, even at the door!

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#### "LET HIM BUY A SWORD"

WHY did our Lord say to His disciples, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one" (Luke 22:36,38), and then afterward say to St. Peter: "Put up thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword"?--Matthew 26:51,52.

We should remember the circumstances. Jesus knew that His hour was come in which He would be betrayed, made prisoner, and the next day be crucified. It was necessary to show that His capture was not made by force, but that He voluntarily permitted Himself to be taken and crucified. The Father might know, the angels might know, and His disciples might know that He had power to ask of the Father legions of angels for His defense and protection from the hands of His enemies; but others could not know this. It was desirable that it should be clearly manifested that Jesus and His disciples could have defended themselves, as St. Peter, indeed, started out to do when he drew his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. Jesus promptly healed the ear and instructed

Peter to be non-resistant, and surrendered Himself, merely requesting that His disciples be not molested.

The circumstance demonstrated that our Lord surrendered Himself voluntarily, and therein was the lesson. Had there been no swords in the company of His disciples, it might have been claimed that no defense could have been made. The having of the swords made possible the exhibition of the courage of the disciples, and the willingness of Jesus to submit Himself.

When Jesus said that if necessary their garments

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should be sold to purchase a sword, the Apostles responded that they had in their company two swords; and Jesus answered, "It is enough." They were intended merely for a demonstration, and not for a defense.

Nothing in this Scripture seems to give any warrant to warfare, nor to the implication of some that Jesus desired His followers to take the sword. True, not all who have taken to the sword have perished by the sword, and not all who have avoided the sword have preserved their lives, but it is a general principle which the Lord discusses. He who prepares himself for warfare and trouble will be pretty sure to get plenty of it, according to the general course of the fallen human nature. On the other hand, the Lord's disciples are enjoined to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."--Hebrews 12:14.

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#### INTERESTING LETTERS

##### WAS DISGUSTED WITH MAKE-BELIEVE RELIGION

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:--

A deep feeling of love for you, the honored servant of our Father in Heaven, prompts me to express my thankfulness just this once for having been brought into the light now shining so brightly. Hitherto I have sought to quell the desire from a realization that you receive many thousands such letters, and that I should not encroach upon your valuable time. Please do not feel obligated to answer this.

I first came in contact with Present Truth in 1902, through reading several of the Volumes; and a profound impression was made upon me. At that time I was teacher of a large school in Jamaica, Catechist of the Church of England, Sunday School Superintendent, Choir Master, and the rest of it. Pressure on all sides was brought to bear, and my desire to embrace the Truth was squeezed out of me. For nearly ten years I never came in contact with so much as one of your tracts. I became intensely worldly; and, thoroughly disgusted with myself and the make-believe religion, I quit the whole

thing in 1907 and started anew on the Isthmus of Panama.

In September, 1911, my wife bought a copy of "Daniel and the Revelation." Trying to read this book caused me to root out an old paper covered Volume V. which had followed us around these many years. It was in trying to compare the two books that I got a fresh start; and the Lord, almost miraculously, supplied the other volumes. Determined that the opportunity should not slip this time, I carefully made up my mind, and offered myself in full consecration to God on January 1st, 1912. My dear wife also consecrated about the same time.

Since then our path has been continuously upward. We have read hard, prayed much, and endeavored to live Christ; and oh, the blessedness! Only those who have been with Jesus and have learned of Him can appreciate this wonderful transformation of mind.

Next to the Lord Jesus our thanks are due to you, as our consecration was solely the product of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and your writings have been the most important element in the development of our characters.

Enclosed are four questions which have caused a good deal of division of thought among us of the Panama Class. I am aware that all of them have been treated by you time and again. But we are so dull of comprehension and so leaky!

I close with warmest love and appreciation for you and the Bethel family, whom we remember daily in prayer.

I am yours by His grace,

G.L. HARRY.--Balboa, Canal Zone.

Questions. (1) When the Apostle Paul says, "Let your women keep silence in the Churches" (1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:11,12), does he include giving thoughts in a Berean Study?

(2) Does the Church belong to the order of Melchizedek during the Gospel Age, actually or prospectively? In either case, where does the "reigning" come in? Or are we in some way connected with the Aaronic Priesthood?

(3) What is meant by "intuitive knowledge"? Does the Lord Jesus now possess this kind of knowledge, and will the Church eventually attain to the same?

(4) Since all must "honor the Son even as they honor the Father," wherein is Jehovah's superiority? Is it a superiority of mental power or merely of seniority?

#### ANSWER TO ABOVE LETTER AND QUESTIONS

Your welcome letter of the 3rd inst. is before me. I rejoice with you that the Lord has pursued you through His mercy and love, and that you have surrendered to Him. I trust you may continue to abide under His shadow and to serve Him and to thus have the necessary preparation for a share in the Heavenly Kingdom.

Replying to your questions: We understand that there would be no violation of the Apostle's injunction in the Sisters' taking part in a Berean Study. If there are no consecrated or competent Brethren present, I see no reason why

the Sisters might not lead a Berean Class. The Church in association with her Head will be the Melchizedek Priest, during the Millennial Age. That Priest, Prophet, Teacher, is not yet fully raised up from amongst the people, but will be entirely raised up by the close of this Age, perfected in the First Resurrection. (Acts 3:23; Eph. 2:10-16.) Consequently no reigning takes place as yet, except as our Lord is taking to Himself His great power and beginning His Reign--the majority of the Church already with Him on the other side the veil, and we on this side gradually passing over.

Intuitive knowledge would be a direct apprehension, without the process of reasoning, or the necessity for proof. The Bible assures us that all power is possessed by our Lord Jesus since His resurrection. This would seem to include intuitive knowledge. The Church has the promise that in the resurrection she will be like her Lord. It is further written: "Now we know in part; then we shall know even as we are known."

To honor the Son even as we honor the Father does not mean necessarily to give Him the same degree of honor; but rather we might state it, "We honor the Father. Even so let us honor the Son also--as the Son, as the Father's Logos and Chief Representative."

With Christian love to yourself and all the dear friends with whom you are associated or come in contact, I remain  
Your brother and servant in the Lord.

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#### RE SOME CLASS BUSINESS METHODS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Ever since our Class has been organized much time has been consumed each month in our business meetings, but since all matters are decided by the Class, under present arrangements, we do not see how such meetings can be avoided and less time spent.

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We believe that with your wide and varied experience, you could give us a few valuable suggestions along this line and we would be glad if you would give us some advice.

Praying the Lord's rich blessing upon you daily, we remain  
Yours in His service, ST. JOSEPH [MO.] CLASS.

In Reply

Where a Class finds, after trial, that one or more of its Elders or Deacons possess good business acumen and faithfulness, it sometimes proves a good plan to make a Business Committee of such and leave much of the Business routine to such Committee. Care, however, should be observed not to put matters too fully out of the hands of the Class. Care also should be observed not to put too much power into the hands of any who evidence a desire to grasp power and to exceed the wishes of the Class. In all matters the easiest and smoothest way of obtaining results is advisable; but the

authority of the Class should be recognized. Any one ignoring the Class and its wishes would better be left without any special service as Elder, Deacon, etc.

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DEAR FRIENDS:--

In THE TOWER of February 15, I read some quotations from alleged German sermons, extracted from the Methodist Times, and supposed to be faithful translations from these sermons. Since reading them I received a package of newspapers from my home, Copenhagen, in one of which is an alleged truthful explanation of those sermons.

Pastor Loebel, of Leipzig, does not even exist. Professor Rheinhold Seeby should be Seeberg; he denies absolutely to have said anything of the kind quoted; and, while Philippi's expressions are not absolutely denied, their authenticity is very doubtful.

I enclose the article from the Danish paper Robenhavn. If you so think, a correction in THE TOWER might help remove some of the added bitter feelings against Germans in general. My sympathy is rather on the side of France and England; but I desire justice to all.

Yours in His service, C. PETERSEN.

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#### GENERAL CONVENTIONS

- SIOUX CITY, IA.--July 6-9. For assignments address A. J. Strite, 1422 W. 5th St.
- NEWPORT, R.I.--July 9-16. For assignments address Mrs. Anna R. Calvert, 12 Everett St.
- PORTLAND, ME.--July 21-23. For assignments address A. F. Buxton, 55 Chestnut St.
- NORFOLK, VA.--July 22-30. For assignments address P. L. Derring, 216 12th St.
- NIAGARA FALLS, N.Y.--Aug. 19-22. For assignments address A. Fosbraey, 727 Pine Ave.
- NASHVILLE, TENN.--Aug. 24-27. For assignments address Milton E. Confehr, 1516 McGavock St.
- LOS ANGELES, CAL.--Sept. 2-10. The Long Beach Convention has been transferred to Los Angeles. For assignments address F.P. Sherman, 808 S. Figueroa St.
- SEATTLE, WASH.--Sept. 14-17. For assignments address H.G. Backbock, 2410 First Ave., W.
- MILWAUKEE, WIS.--Sept. 16-24. For assignments address C. Hilton Ellison, 2704 Wells St.
- DAYTON, O.--October 5-8. For assignments address Dr. Chas. E. Kerney, 475 S. Broadway.

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#### NEWPORT CONVENTION TRANSPORTATION

Special New England rates to Newport, R.I., are as follows:

- (1) On the Certificate Plan or
- (2) Special Convention Rate, 2 cents per mile.

Tickets to be sold and certificates issued and good going July 8, 9 and 10 and returning to reach original starting point not later than midnight of July 19.

- (3) Or Mileage Book or
- (4) Ten or more traveling together can get one ticket for the party at cheapest rate or
- (5) Sound Steamers can be used. The Bay State Line from N.Y. City to Newport, \$2.05; Stateroom for 2, \$1.00. Colonial Line, \$2.35; Stateroom for 2, \$1.00.

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#### NORFOLK CONVENTION RATES

GENTLEMEN:--A very low rate will be named by the Seaboard Air Line Railway to Norfolk and return, account above mentioned Convention, with suitable selling dates and limits. We are the direct line from this territory to Norfolk. The round trip will be approximately three cents per mile, and we will be glad to furnish the exact rate from any point in the South when requested to do so.

The best train for those attending from this territory to use is our train No. 6, leaving Birmingham 9:50 a.m., July 21st (Friday), passing Wellington, 11:44 a.m.; Cedartown, 12:54 Noon; Atlanta, 3:00 p.m.; Athens, 5:17 p.m.; Greenwood, 8:39 p.m., arriving Norfolk 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time, Saturday, July 22d.

We expect to provide extra equipment on this train, of whatever style is desired, to take care of those using it, and are anxious to have advice as soon as possible how many will go, whether they will want Pullman, and if so, if they will want it all the way through to Norfolk, or just for the night, so that ample accommodations can be provided for. Please address

Yours very truly, FRED GEISSLER,  
Asst. Gen. Pass. Agt., Atlanta, Ga.

From other points, excursion rates may be had to Old Point Comfort, near Norfolk. Remember that the special rates for parties of ten apply on all railroads at all times when the party travels on one ticket.

From New York City the rate, all rail, or rail and water, is \$14.00 the round trip. The stateroom will be extra--\$1.00 via Washington or Baltimore.

The all-water route, \$14.00, includes stateroom and meals--Old Dominion Line.

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#### POLISH CONVENTION

CHICAGO--JULY 1-4. This is the second Polish Convention of this season; the first being held at Toledo, O., in June.

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#### ARMENIAN CONVENTION

PROVIDENCE, R.I., JULY 2-4.

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"LEST WE FORGET!"

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."--Hebrews 12:14.

ALTHOUGH the Lord's people are counseled by the Lord's Word to be peacemakers, and to pursue peace, nevertheless they are forewarned that they must fight. On the surface these injunctions seem paradoxical. It seems strange that we should be admonished to be peacemakers and then be told that we are to fight. These conflicting statements may be harmonized however.

If we are loyal to the Lord and to His cause, our loyalty will bring us into opposition with whatever is contrary to God. It is not that we are to strive with people; but the very fact that we are counseled to be peacemakers implies that there will be opposition.

How is it that when one wishes to do right and is doing this to the best of his ability he meets with opposition? It was so with our Master. Although He was perfect, yet He had opposition. We need not be surprised, then, if we who are imperfect should have similar experiences. What did Jesus do to cause people to do evil toward Him? He did only good and sought to bless all. His loyalty to the Father, however, made it a necessity for Him to rebuke sin and error. This brought upon Him the antagonism of those who upheld these sins and errors. The darkness hates the light because it is a constant rebuke to the darkness.

Then we not only have the opposition of the spirit of the world, but also the opposition of our own fallen flesh and the virulent opposition of the great Adversary and his hosts. What a power this all means! At one time in our lives we did not know what it meant to have the opposition of the world, the flesh and the Devil; but we are learning what this means, dear brethren. Our great Adversary is a very wily foe, and is on the alert to seize every opportunity to ensnare and entrap us, to put our enemies in antagonism against us, and to stir up all kinds of persecution and opposition. One might think that Satan would be satisfied to have taken the wrong course himself; and that he would ere now have been ready to say, "I have had enough of it." Why does he not say this? It is because he is so implacable a foe to God and to all that is good. He has so hardened his heart to all that is holy that he cannot be renewed to repentance, to change about and take an opposite course.

#### LET US TAKE WARNING FROM SATAN'S COURSE

What a solemn warning this should be to us to resist stoutly and unequivocally the very beginnings of sin, to resist the approach of temptation to be disloyal to God in the slightest degree, by hastening to the Throne of Grace in every time of danger! The Adversary's designs seem to be especially against the saints of God. He steadfastly opposes all those who desire to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, rather than those who walk according to the course of this world; for the latter are already more or less under his control. He does not seek to run after them or seek to entrap them. All he needs to do is to keep them from the light.--2 Cor. 4:4.

Satan does not wish the glorious light of God's goodness to shine into men's hearts; for wherever the light of Truth goes it brings a transformation. We become changed men and women as soon as the Truth shines into our hearts; and this transformation goes on day by day. When Satan sees this, he exerts all his power to blind



the one who has gotten out from under his domination, and to weave his web around him again. When the fly begins to struggle to escape, the spider at once proceeds to strengthen the web around him. If the fly escapes the snare, the spider will again entrap him, if possible.

But in spite of the foes with which we have to contend, the foes without and within, we are perfectly safe so long as we keep close to the Master. Stronger and greater is He that is on our part than all they that are against us. We have learned something of the character of our Heavenly Friend. At first we saw that God was a great Being, deserving of our reverence; but now we are coming to see more and more how just He is, how wise He is, how loving and lovely He is. As we come to thus appreciate His glorious character, it inspires within us a great desire to be like Him, and we find that the injunction of Scripture is that we should be like our Father in Heaven. Jesus was like Him, and we are instructed to become copies of God's dear Son. "Be ye followers of us," said the Apostle, "even as we are followers of Christ."

#### SELF OUR SPECIAL BATTLE-GROUND

We are now God's special representatives in the world, fighting a good fight of faith against sin and evil, especially in ourselves. We are not at all commissioned to clean up the world. The Bible gives us no such instructions. The Lord will use us to do this work by and by, when we reach the Kingdom. We cannot now quite get ahead of the evil that we find in our own flesh, and so we need to turn our forces against sin entrenched in our mortal bodies. We need to exercise great care lest, while we preach to others, we ourselves should become castaways. What a thought that is, that, after having told others about God, His love, His power and His salvation in Christ, we should ourselves become castaways from this glorious salvation!

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As New Creatures we should be very vigilant, should continue to grow, should increase in power to overcome the flesh. Then we shall be safe. Self is to be our special battle-ground. Many of the Lord's people have a great deal of natural combativeness. This is a good trait if controlled and turned in the right direction. Combativeness is necessary, or we could never overcome. But we need to restrain ourselves that we do not fight the brethren; and we are not to enter into a personal combat with the Devil. We are no match for him. But we are to resist him. The Lord will soon take hold of him and bind him up for a thousand years. He will conquer the Adversary and will undo all his works. But it will require the entire thousand years to accomplish fully that work. We need not hope to overthrow Satan or his works while we are in the flesh. It is not our mission. What the Lord has

given us to do is to conquer ourselves, to control this body which is of the fallen race of Adam, to keep ourselves that that Wicked One touch us not.--1 John 5:18.

We all have natural inclinations toward sin. It is necessary, therefore, that we overcome the inclinations of the flesh, the disposition of the flesh--all these things that war against the Spirit. From the moment that we surrendered ourselves to the Lord and were begotten of the Holy Spirit, we were New Creatures. Old things have passed away, and all things have become new. We no longer belong to the old family, the family of Adam; we are an entirely new creation. We have passed from death unto life, from condemnation to death in Adam to a new life in Christ. The continuation of this new life will depend

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upon our faithfulness as children of God. We must show our loyalty to the Lord by resisting everything that pertains to the old life.

#### SCRIPTURAL ENCOURAGEMENTS TO COME OFTEN TO GOD

None of us can fully do the things that we would. Some are more and some less fallen by nature. If we think we are succeeding fully, it is because we are more or less blind to our own deficiencies. We would do perfectly, but we cannot. But by fighting a good fight, we are to prove to the Lord that we are doing the best we can. We are not merely to make a little effort, but are to put forth all our strength, which will be supplemented by the grace of the Lord. If, then, in spite of our best efforts we come short, as we surely shall, what then? "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Thus we are to continue "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." This does not mean that we are to keep from ever getting any spot or wrinkle upon our garments; for we could not avoid so doing. But God's wonderful arrangement is that we may come to Him and claim the merit of the blood of the Savior who died for us. We need not permit a spot or wrinkle to remain so as to blemish our glorious wedding robe. When we first came into the Father's family we received merit to cover all our past sins; but we have weaknesses and sins of the present, and we need the blood for these also. Thus the Lord has provided for our need. With this knowledge of the love of the Father and of our Lord Jesus, we are to come boldly--courageously--to the Throne of Heavenly Grace.

Some may feel that it is rather presumptuous to come thus to the Lord for continual cleansing from all earthly defilement, for the forgiveness of our daily unwitting transgressions. But we are instructed to the contrary by the Apostle. We need the encouragement of God's Word thus to come to the Lord to be forgiven. The flesh says, "Do not go very often to the Throne of Grace." When we first made a mistake it was comparatively easy to take

it to the Lord. We came without much difficulty, or perhaps without any. We told the Lord that our transgression was not wilful, and that we were sorry; and we realized His forgiveness. But the second time it was not so easy; and it becomes more difficult the oftener we have to come, every time we sin. We told Him at first that we would try to be more careful; yet we continued perhaps to come short of the standard which we recognized. So we were tempted not to come to God with the matter.

#### NEVER PRESUME UPON GOD'S MERCY

We all need to refresh our minds with the promises for our encouragement in continuing to come for mercy and grace to help in every time of need. Thus we are made stronger for the difficulties of the future. We are not, however, to presume upon the mercy of the Lord by becoming measurably careless as to our words and thoughts and deeds; for if the Lord sees anything of this spirit, He will not readily forgive us and restore us to favor. He will withhold the assurance of His forgiveness; and we may come to Him again and again before we realize the sense of His love and blessing. This will make us more careful not to be thus derelict another time.

The condition of those who fail to keep their record clean before the Lord is a very sad one. After the first or second offense they say to themselves, "I cannot go to the Lord again; I will go to sleep and forget it." They wake up in the morning out of harmony with God. But they think, "Well, I cannot help it." At night the thought that all is not right with the Lord comes again. "I know that I have had plenty of difficulties today and more failures; but I cannot go to God. It is of no use." So the breach widens. They forget the great mercy of the Lord. They forget that He has said, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him; for He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust."

This is a wrong course, fraught with extreme danger. We should clean up our accounts with the Lord every day. We should retire every night just as we should wish to do if we knew that we would not wake up in the flesh. In the morning before we arise our first thought should be, "How can I please the Lord today and be helpful to others, and especially how can I overcome myself?" Some who fail to take advantage of the grace offered for every time of need gradually get so far off from the Lord that by and by they scarcely think about it any longer. They have a reverence for God, but they do not love Him. He is not close to them, and they know it. They know the right way, but they feel that they cannot walk in it. They realize that they have spots on their robe, but they try to put the thought behind them. If this course continues, where will it end?

These are not the things to put behind us. The things that the Lord has forgiven should be put behind us; but the things for which we have not sought forgiveness

should trouble us until they are settled. It is not a good plan to wait until evening to go to the Lord if we realize that we have displeased Him. If we can go to our closet at once, we should do so. If not, we might close our eyes for a moment and get into communication with our Father in Heaven through the merits of our Savior. Let us keep in constant touch with the Lord, and tell Him about all our affairs, our mistakes, our unwitting trespasses. There are probably many trespasses committed by us that we do not recognize. But daily application for the blood of cleansing will keep our garments clean and white.

#### CARELESS ONES UNFIT FOR THE KINGDOM

Those who get spots upon their robes and leave them there will not be fit for the Kingdom of God; for the Bride of Christ will be composed of only those who will be "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Jesus is

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to present this class blameless and unreprouvable before the Father. They did not walk perfectly, without a blemish; but they were careful to keep their garments unspotted by going often to the Lord. They let nothing keep them away. This is the spirit of the Bride class. We each wish to be of that class, dear friends. If any of us are not sure just now as to our standing with the Lord, let us make haste to go to Him and see that the record is cleared by our dear Redeemer and Advocate. Let us not wait, but go at once.

The faithful class is pictured to us in Revelation 7:3,4 and 14:1-5. These are the 144,000 who have the Father's name in their foreheads. They sing the new song, which none can sing but these 144,000. Oh, we long to be among them! We cannot afford to be anywhere else. The outcome is all in our own hands whether we succeed or fail, after God has given us His Holy Spirit. It will be our own fault if we miss the Kingdom. There will be no blame to attach to the Lord; for He has arranged for our continual cleansing day by day. His grace is provided for us at every step of the way; and His loving, protecting providences are continually about us if we are trustful and obedient to the best of our ability.

The other class who allow spots to accumulate upon their robes, is a "great multitude, whose number no man knoweth." (Revelation 7:9); that is, they are not of an ordained or fixed number as is the Bride class. These must through great tribulation wash their robes, all spotted and soiled, in the blood of the Lamb. These will then stand before the Throne, will serve God day and night in His Temple. The Bride class will be The Temple; or, in another figure, they will be seated upon the Messianic Throne with their Lord and Bridegroom. These different figures give different phases of the honored position and work of the Body of Christ in glory. These

are spoken of as wearing crowns, the others as merely carrying palm branches, indicating final victory.

How glad we are that our dear Heavenly Father has mercifully provided for those who through lack of sufficient zeal and faithfulness lose the "Prize of the High Calling"! We rejoice that even the "foolish virgins" do not lose all, but will through tears and travail of soul yet come wholly back to the Lord. They will finish their course in death. Theirs is an enforced destruction of the flesh. Although they covenanted to sacrifice it willingly yet they failed to do so. They love the Lord and love righteousness, but not sufficiently to be thoroughly loyal and faithful; and so they must be severely scourged, that their spirits may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus.

#### EARNEST EXHORTATION TO FAITHFULNESS

No one has been called of God to the Great Company class. "We are all called in one hope of our calling." Let us then walk with the Lord in white every day, dear brethren and sisters. Let us keep our robes spotless. It is easier to get spots on them than to get the spots off, and each spot will be more difficult than the previous one. We understand spots to be the result of a measure of carelessness. "It is impossible for me to keep my robe from ever getting spotted," you say, "but I am very thankful that the Lord has provided a way whereby the spots may be removed when I earnestly apply for the cleansing."

Each experience of this kind should make us more humble, more careful, more alive to our weaknesses and more watchful to avoid getting spots on our white robes. Otherwise the Lord will chastise us by withholding for a time His peace, lest we think that we may be careless, and then may have the spot removed without any trouble. The Lord wishes us to realize that this is no light matter. Then let us each be very faithful, that we may soon hear the Master's sweet "Well done!"

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#### WHAT IS UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION?

WE ARE asked whether or not we believe in Universal Redemption, and what we consider to be the full scope or meaning of the term. We reply:

To our understanding, many who use the expression, "Universal Redemption," fail to understand clearly its signification. They mean universal and eternal salvation, which is another matter entirely. We believe that the Bible teaches Universal Redemption in its statement that Jesus Christ, "by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," and that He "gave Himself

a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (Hebrews 2:9; 1 Timothy 2:5,6.) Again, "He is the propitiation for our [the Church's] sins and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2.) All these texts speak of the redemption of mankind; and all clearly and positively declare that it will be universal--that is, that it will apply to every member of our race.

The universality of the Redemption, having been thus established, our next question would properly be, What is included in the word Redemption? The answer is that in the Greek, as well as in the English, the word has the significance of purchase--of the acquiring of something by the giving of something else in its stead. This thought is emphasized several times in the Bible. Not only are we told that we are bought with a price, even the precious blood of Jesus, but we have Jesus' word for it that He gave Himself a corresponding price, for sinners. (Matthew 20:28.) The word used in the Greek is lutron-anti, signifying a price in exact offset. St. Paul gives exactly the same thought when he says, "the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a Ransom-price [anti-lutron] for all." (1 Timothy 2:5,6.) St. Paul again emphasizes the same thought when he says, "As by a man came death, by a Man comes also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive." --1 Corinthians 15:21,22.

Thus we have the matter of Redemption and the Redemption-price for mankind emphasized and particularized.

It surely is universal; it covers every member of our race. The sin came by one man, and he alone was sentenced by the great Heavenly Court to die. His wife and his children share with him in this penalty--not by direct sentence, but indirectly; for the measure of life which we have come from Father Adam, and it was only a spark, its right to exist having been forfeited before it came to us. It was thus, however, that our great Creator provided Universal Redemption. By this decree against one person He made it possible that one perfect man might redeem the condemned one. It was to this end that our Lord, the great Logos, left the Heavenly Courts, humbled Himself and was made flesh, the Man Christ Jesus, who tasted death for every man. His death is sufficient for the satisfaction of the claims of Justice against the first man; and all the results of that sentence in that man's race are provided for.

#### UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION DEFINED

In order to see what Adam and his race may expect as a result of this Universal Redemption, we must notice what Father Adam was before he sinned; for redemption implies the bringing of him and his race back into the condition

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in which he was before he sinned. Note, therefore:

(1) Adam had fellowship with his Creator.

(2) He lived under Divine blessing, which provided for his every need and maintained him in life as long as he was obedient.

(3) His claims had not been decided as respects eternity. He was in the School of Experience, gaining knowledge, and was assured of a continuance of his life as long as he remained obedient and used his knowledge in harmony with his Creator's will.

(4) He was, therefore, a probationer for eternal life. It is our understanding that had Adam continued obedient under certain tests he would have been recognized as a graduate in the school of experience and as no longer properly subjected to tests and trials. But he never reached this position. He failed in his trial time, and never attained his graduation therefrom.

Universal Redemption, therefore, means a bringing of Adam and his race back again to the probationary state in which Adam was when he sinned. That which was lost is that which was redeemed, and which is to be restored. God's provision, the Scriptures tell us, is for "Times of Restitution"; and those times, or years, of Restitution are for the bringing of Adam and his race back to all that they at first had. The Scriptures intimate very clearly that the experiences of mankind--first, under the reign of Sin and Death; and secondly, under the Restitution blessings of Messiah's Kingdom--will give such ample knowledge of God and of His Plan that at the conclusion of Messiah's Reign every member of the race will have had his probation in full--full knowledge, full opportunity.

The Scriptures show us that some, when granted all these blessings, will resist them and, sinning wilfully, will be accounted as unworthy of any further favor of the Almighty, and will be destroyed in the Second Death. They show us clearly that in the end of the Millennial Age, some, even of those who will attain full human perfection, will not be accounted worthy of eternal life, but on the contrary will be destroyed in the Second Death, because, having enjoyed their share in the Universal Redemption, they have not improved the opportunities for such character development as would meet the Divine requirements. Their destruction is shown in Rev. 20:7-10. It is also pictured in the destruction of the goat class in the parable of the Sheep and Goats.--Matt. 25:31-46.

#### UNIVERSAL SALVATION EXPLAINED

But some one will inquire, Will not the redemption which God has provided still pursue them and recover them from the Second Death? We answer, No! During the Millennium Christ will give to all every assistance necessary and proper. "The world will be judged in righteousness." (Acts 17:31.) Besides, to suppose anything further to be done for these after they have gone into the Second Death through their own wilful course,

would imply another sacrifice for sins. The sin which brought death to Father Adam was wilful sin. This the death of Jesus will fully offset: but the sin which will bring the Second Death will be individual, wilful sin on the part of every one who will die the Second Death; and the cost of redeeming each one of those sinners would be the death of a sinless one as a sacrifice for each.

The case of Adam is altogether different from what it will be with the race then; for each one of those sinners would be equally as guilty as was Adam himself; and each one will be personally condemned to the Second Death. If each one were to be redeemed again, he would need a personal Savior. The Bible intimates a considerable number of goats at the end of the Millennial Age, who will come under the Second Death penalty; and it would require an equal number of perfect sacrifices for their redemption from that sentence. What good would that do if they had not profited by all the experiences of the present life and all the experiences of the Millennial Restitution time? We could not imagine their profiting by any experiences.

Evidently, therefore, the Divine Plan is the only wise one; and no redemption will be given for the recovery of such from the Second Death, nor is there any kind of hope for them. Who would die for them? Who would redeem them? Not Christ; for the Apostle distinctly points out, "Christ dieth no more." (Romans 6:9.) Would a company of the holy angels voluntarily die for them under all these circumstances and conditions, seeing that they had sinned against such light, knowledge and loving provision? And would any of the Church, the Bride of Christ, die for them? We believe not. Would any wise or intelligent being give his life a corresponding price for one who was incorrigible under such favorable conditions? We think it unreasonable so to suppose.

#### A WORD OF WARNING

It surprises us that any who have once tasted of the good Word, and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, should be liable in any degree to be entrapped by such sophistries of the Adversary. We are to remember, however, that the Adversary is very alert at the present time to find snares for the Lord's people. We are led to write these words by the inspired suggestion of St. James, "Brethren, if any of you err from the Truth, and one convert him, let him know that he that converteth such from the error of his way [course] will save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins." (James 5:20.) This does not signify that God's people might not be more or less ensnared with errors; but it does signify that the course or tendency is to lead off more and more from the Truth, from the way of Life into the way of Death.

We are in the Day of the Lord mentioned by the Apostle; and instead of casting aside the armor or of trying to make some improvement upon the plain statements



of the Word of God or of permitting ourselves to take our own or other men's philosophies instead of the Word of God, we must be buckling on the breastplate, fastening our helmet, girding up the loins of our minds, grasping the shield of faith and taking a firm grip upon the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, in order that we may be able to keep standing in this Evil Day; and not only so, but that we may help others to stand against the wiles of our great Adversary.--Ephesians 6:12-18.

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"CALLED"

"Partakers of the Heavenly calling."--Heb. 3:1.

"Holy brethren, called and chosen by the sovereign Voice of  
Might,  
See your high and holy calling out of darkness into light!  
Called according to His purpose and the riches of His love;  
Won to listen by the leading of the gentle, Heavenly Dove!

"Called to suffer with our Master, patiently to run His race;  
Called a blessing to inherit, called to holiness and grace;  
Called to fellowship with Jesus, by the Ever-Faithful One;  
Called to His eternal glory, to the Kingdom of His Son.

"Whom He calleth He preserveth, and His glory they shall see;  
He is faithful that hath called you; He will do it, fear not ye!  
Therefore, holy brethren, onward! thus ye make your calling  
sure;  
For the Prize of this High Calling bravely to the end endure."

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THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD  
--AUGUST 6.--1 CORINTHIANS 13.--

GODLIKENESS IN THE HEART, IN THE TONGUE, IN THE HANDS,  
IN THE THOUGHTS--LOVE THE ESSENCE OF THE DIVINE  
CHARACTER--DIFFERENT KINDS OF LOVE--THE SPECTRUM  
OF LOVE REVEALS THE CHARACTERISTICS ESSENTIAL TO  
MEMBERSHIP IN THE GLORIFIED BODY OF CHRIST--  
SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION--LOVE THE QUALITY  
WHICH WILL PERSIST THROUGHOUT ETERNITY--THE GIFTS  
OF HEALING, ETC., CEASE.

"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three;  
and the greatest of these is love."--Verse 13.

LOVE is a quality which seems beyond the  
power of man to describe. The best that

we can do is to describe its conduct. Those who possess this quality are able to appreciate it, but are not able to explain it; for it is of God--God-likeness in the heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts, permeating all the human attributes and seeking to control them.

There are different kinds of love, however; and the Apostle is not speaking of general affection, but of that particular kind of love which belongs to God and to the New Creation, begotten of Him. There is an animal love, such as the brute creation exercise toward their young--a love which frequently leads to the sacrifice of life itself in its devotion. This kind of love inheres in the natural man, even in his fallen condition. It is all a more or less selfish love; for at times it is even ready to rob others in order to lavish good things upon those whom it favors. This is not the love which the Apostle describes, nor is he addressing the natural man. He addresses the New Creation, and informs them that the natural man will not be able to appreciate that which he presents. In order to have a clear comprehension of this love and a hearty acceptance of it as the rule of life, it is apparently necessary that we be begotten from Above, by the Most High.--1 Corinthians 2:9-14.

#### THE "MORE EXCELLENT WAY"

The Church at Corinth had been founded for nearly five years, and had enjoyed a wide range of Divine providences. In addressing this Epistle to them, St. Paul was evidently considering well their needs, and seeking to minister to them the Divine Message of grace. He may not have realized how great a work he was doing and how far-reaching would be the scope of his instructions. Perhaps it was better for himself that he did not know how important was his service to the entire Church of the Gospel Age. Such a knowledge might have made him heady--the very condition of things which the Lord was warding off by permitting him to have still the "thorn in the flesh."--2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

In this Epistle St. Paul has been gradually leading the minds of his readers up to a higher appreciation of the blessings which they were enjoying. In the chapter preceding today's Study he calls attention to the various "gifts of the Spirit" which were conferred upon the early Church for its establishment and development. He closes the chapter with the exhortation that while esteeming these gifts, each member of the Church should covet earnestly the superior ones. Then he adds, "Yet I show unto you a more excellent way"--something still better than any of those gifts of the Holy Spirit. Our Study pertains to this more excellent ambition which should actuate every child of God; namely, the acquisition and development of the spirit of Love, the Spirit of the Lord.

The gifts of the Spirit, which the Apostle discusses

in the chapter preceding our lesson, took, with the early Church, the place of other blessings which we now enjoy. They had no Bibles, as we have, no Concordances, no helps in Bible study. Therefore they needed the miraculous "gift of tongues" to draw them together once a week to consider the Lord's Message. They needed that the Message should come in this miraculous manner, in order that they might the better appreciate it and realize that it was of the Lord, not of themselves. This made opportunity for another gift, "the interpretation of tongues."

Thus by the various gifts of the Holy Spirit they were drawn together and edified--built up--until such times as the books of the New Testament gradually accumulated. After the death of the Apostles and the consequent cessation of the gifts, these Divine providences of the written Word were quite sufficient, as the Apostle here sets forth.

After St. Paul had called attention to these various facts and to the oneness of the Church, he pointed out to the Corinthians that they were putting rather too high a value upon the "gift of tongues." While a gift had its proper place in the Church as a blessing, he explained, yet a still higher blessing lay in the ability to present the Truth in a well-understood tongue, or language. He declared himself able to speak with more tongues than could any of them, and yet pointed out that he preferred to speak in that tongue which would be understood by his hearers. Finally in his argument he came to our present lesson, which he gave as the climax to his hints preceding.

#### SUPERIORITY OF THE TONGUE OF LOVE

Boldly the Apostle sets forth a great truth, which has come to be more and more recognized amongst Christian people everywhere, in proportion to their development in the character-likeness of their Redeemer, in proportion to their development as the children of God. St. Paul declares that not knowledge, not wisdom, not talents, not gifts of any kind are the things to be sought for above all else, but that love should be most highly esteemed.

God is Love; and therefore whoever would be pleasing to Him must develop this disposition; for according to the Divine Law no one will ever have full Divine approval or life everlasting on any plane of being without the full establishment in the heart, in the character, of this Divine quality of Love. Therefore "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." (Romans 13:10.) The truth of this statement is obvious to all.

St. Paul forcefully declares that if he had all the tongues of earth and of Heaven and could speak them with perfection and charming rhythm, even these would not constitute a proof of his acceptance to life eternal. Should he do all this in a perfunctory manner, even to the extent of speaking of the Divine character and in the interests of his fellows, he might still have no heart in the matter, but be merely like sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The argument, therefore, is that tongues were not to be

esteemed as a proof of Christian character.

The Apostle's declaration is introduced with an "if," which might be challenged, to a certain extent, by the assertion that no one could speak forth with power the Gospel of Christ unless he possessed the spirit of love. Although we have all heard public speakers who could deliver very beautiful essays upon Scriptural themes, we have generally perceived a hollowness in their teachings unless they spoke from the heart, prompted by love of the Truth--not by love of applause, nor for love of money.

Next he argues respecting prophecy--oratory--and the understanding of mysteries and knowledge and respecting the possession of mountain-moving faith. He asks, Would these abilities not signify a glorious development of character,

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a full acceptance with God and an assurance of life eternal? Then he answers, No; precious as these abilities are, they would have no value whatever in the Divine estimation, would profit us nothing, unless based upon love. How the Apostle's argument exalts this quality of Love before our minds! He proceeds to say that although we should give all of our goods to feed the poor, and although as martyrs we should be burned at the stake, yet it would profit us nothing if the motive, the sentiment, behind the giving and behind the endurance of martyrdom were not love. Without proper love as the mainspring of our conduct, there will be no reward.

#### LOVE'S CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS

To those of the Lord's people who have never studied out the elements of love, its constituent parts, the Apostle's suggestions in today's Study will seem like a revelation. He enumerates nine component parts:

- (1) Patience--"Love suffereth long";
- (2) Kindness--"and is kind";
- (3) Generosity--"Love envieth not";
- (4) Humility--"Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up";
- (5) Courtesy--"Doth not behave itself unseemly";
- (6) Unselfishness--"Seeketh not her own";
- (7) Good Temper--"Is not easily provoked";
- (8) Guilelessness--"Thinketh no evil";
- (9) Honesty--"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth."

Despite all our pains and aches physical, what a wonderful world this would be if every member of the race were perfect in these qualities enumerated! However, it would be a useless waste of time to weep over what we have not, or to chide unnecessarily our neighbors and our friends because they, like ourselves, are not perfect in love. Indeed, the more we come to understand the teachings of the Bible, the more sympathy we may have with the poor "groaning creation." In one sense of the word

our sympathies are all for this glorious standard which the Apostle holds up before us. We cannot sympathize with the wrong, the error, the evil. It is uncongenial to us. But, understanding the situation, we can sympathize with our fellows and with ourselves as being in a fallen condition, in which none can do the things he would.

The Scriptural key to the situation is the fact that as a race we were born and shapen in iniquity, in sin did our mother conceive us. (Psalm 51:5; Genesis 3:20.) The calamity of sin, imperfection and death has injured the whole world mentally, morally and physically--has made us what the Apostle describes as a "groaning creation." (Romans 8:22.) This knowledge of the facts in the case, possessed by so few, understood by so few, should tend to make these few a peculiar people in their loving sympathy and kindness towards their fellows in distress. Alas, the difficulty is that even these few who know these facts from the Divine Word have selfishness so ingrained in them, and are so oppressed by the cares of this life, that often their sympathies are not all that they should be!

#### NEW CREATURES ALONE ADDRESSED

It is for this reason that the Scriptures do not address the natural man; for his mind is so sodden with selfishness that his eye of pity and his ear of sympathy are well nigh closed. Instead of appealing to the natural man in general, the Scriptures represent that the Lord especially draws some who are possessed of certain qualities of heart and mind, and especially leads these to a knowledge of the Redeemer, leaving it open with them to accept or to reject the offer of Divine grace and forgiveness.

Such as respond are still further enlightened; and, if further responsive, they are treated as justified because of their faith in the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then are granted further special opportunities, and exhortations to make a full consecration of themselves to God and to His service even unto death. If they still respond and make this consecration, they have then come to the place where the Lord is pleased to reckon them dead to earthly things, according to their profession, and to beget them of the Holy Spirit and the glorious promises of His Word, and to count them New Creatures in Christ--members of the Redeemer's Body, which is the Church.

Now they have reached the stage where, as children of God, they must go to school and develop in knowledge and in character, that they may be made actually fit, prepared, suitable, for eternal life and a share with their Redeemer in His Kingdom.

#### LESSONS TAUGHT IN THIS SCHOOL

When we enter the School of Christ, the ultimate purpose of the course of instruction is set before us in the Great Teacher's words, "Be ye like unto your Father which is in Heaven." The same thought is presented to

us in St. Paul's assurance that God has predetermined that only such as become copies of His dear Son--in character likeness--can be His joint-heirs in the promised Kingdom. (Romans 8:29.) When we entered the School of Christ, we did not know that so much would be required of us. We did not understand all that we did when we made our consecration even unto death in the service of righteousness. However, no advantage was taken of us; for what was presented to us, and what we consecrated to do, includes everything in our power--and no more--even unto death. So then, no lesson that can be set before us is beyond our covenant, or agreement to perform.

In the spectrum of love given us in today's Study the Apostle is delineating the various parts of this one great lesson of Christ-likeness, which is God-likeness. He is pointing out what constitutes such a character as God has predetermined that we must have, in order to be worthy of the gift of God, which is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ.--Romans 6:23.

#### LOVE VIEWED IN COMPARISON

"Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Its elements of patience and gentleness are love in the sense of willingness to endure under all sorts of opposition, wherever it sees a proper subject for its sympathy. Love "believeth all things" in the sense that it is not given to doubt, to disbelieve, to impugn the motives and the truthfulness of its fellows. Only after full and convincing proofs to the contrary will it cease to exercise faith. Love "hopeth all things" in the sense that it desires a blessing for all with whom it is in contact; and in harmony with its desire it is continually striving to do them good. Love "endureth all things" in the sense that it cannot be quenched wherever there is anything upon which it can properly exercise itself.

Viewed from another standpoint, these qualities might be interpreted thus: Love "beareth all things," as enduring pressure on every side without being crushed. It "believeth all things," as being full of faith in the Divine promises and arrangement, doubting nothing. It "hopeth all things, in the sense that this perfect love toward God enables the heart to be filled with confidence in the Almighty, in whose love it reposes. It "endureth all things," in the sense that the soul which is united to God by the link of love cannot be vanquished, cannot be overcome; for this is the Divine will and arrangement. God will not suffer any of these little ones to be tempted above that which they are able to bear, but will with every

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temptation provide a way of escape.--1 Corinthians 10:13.

The Apostle institutes a comparison between love and some of the gifts of the Spirit which the Corinthian Church properly held in high esteem. He would have us

all see how infinitely higher love is than any of the gifts in which the early Church rejoiced. Love is not a gift, but a growth. It is a fruitage which must be developed in the garden of our souls, and which must be tended with much care, in order to its proper development. He says that love never fails, but that the other things will fail; namely, the power of prophecy--oratory--the gift of tongues, knowledge, etc. They would lose their value as changing conditions would comparatively do away with their necessity. Prophesying would be done away with, tongues would cease, and knowledge would vanish.

The argument advanced by St. Paul is that all these things would necessarily come to an end, when perfection would come in; for all our gifts and talents are imperfect. Surely with our glorious "change" in the First Resurrection and with the ushering in of the Millennium our conditions will be so different that many things now highly esteemed under present unfavorable circumstances will then be valueless! Just so flints were once valuable for the striking of a light, but are now never used, having been supplanted by matches, electric lights, etc. Many of those gifts, however, including the gift of tongues, perished long before the morning light of the Millennium. Shortly after the death of the Apostles they ceased altogether; for they were imparted only by the Apostles.

#### "GIFTS" VS. "FRUITS"

Next the Apostle compares the gifts of the Spirit with the fruits of the Spirit, and shows that the former, when contrasted with the latter, were as the toys of childhood in comparison with the valuables of manhood. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." So the gifts of tongues, interpretation of tongues, etc., were given to the Church in its infancy, and served useful purposes then. But they were put away as the Church emerged from infancy to the strength and development accruing from a greater knowledge of God's great Plan. The milk of the Word and the strong meat of the Word were purposed by God to develop the members of the Body of Christ, until they all come to the stature of manhood in Christ. The more advanced the Christian, the more surely would he know that the gifts of the Spirit were merely like a childish plaything, to be supplanted by the fruits of the Spirit, much more valuable to the Church in its developed condition.--Hebrews 5:12-14.

St. Paul points us further to the fact that we are living not merely for the present, but especially for the future; and that whatever will last us into the eternal future must certainly be the most important matter for us to acquire. He would have us see that to the Christian that most important thing is the Love which he has described in our Study. Our knowledge, our tongues, etc., of the present time are mere shadows of the great powers which will be ours if we attain to the glorious blessings of the First

Resurrection. Whatever clearness of sight we have at the present time we shall then find to be darkness in comparison with the full light of the glorious Millennial Day.

Where now we see as through an obscure glass, then we shall see face to face. Now we know in part; then we shall know even as we are known.

The Apostle would have the Church see that faith, hope and love--three fruits of the Holy Spirit--are far superior to all the gifts of the Spirit; for these fruits will abide throughout the Age. Until the Millennial Morning we shall need faith, hope and love. We cannot get along without them. We cannot make any progress in the Master's footsteps without these qualities. But if we seek to contrast these imperfect qualities amongst themselves, he points out that the chiefest of these is love.

Love is the Divine quality without which we should still be unsatisfactory to God, even if we possessed all the other qualities which go to make up Christian character. Love is the quality which will persist to all eternity. If we would abide in Divine favor, we shall need always to have Love. As for faith and hope, excellent qualities though they be, the time will come when they shall be swallowed up by sight, by the actualities of the glorious condition of fellowship with the Lord. But love will never fail. Amongst all the graces of the Spirit it stands supreme and eternal.

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THE GRACE OF GIVING  
--AUGUST 13.--2 CORINTHIANS 9.--

GIVING TO THE POOR--LENDING TO THE LORD--THE SECRET OF ISRAEL'S BLINDNESS TO THE GOSPEL--THE BETTER CLASSES OF THE GENTILES ATTRACTED BY THE TRUTH--SYSTEMATIC ALMSGIVING BETTER THAN SPASMODIC CHARITY--GENEROSITY INCULCATES BREADTH OF MIND AND HEART--DEGREE OF PROSPERITY SHOULD BE MEASURE OF OUR CHARITY.

"In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."--Acts 20:35. R. V.

CHRISTIAN benevolence--almsgiving--is the lesson inculcated in today's Study. The general disposition of the fallen nature is to give adherence or support to the strong and to expect weaker ones to rally around and uphold us. This is self-pleasing--the way of the fallen nature. But the method of the New Creature in Christ is to be the reverse of this. He is to be on the lookout for the welfare, the interests and the comforts of



others, especially of those in his own family and of the weaker members of the Household of Faith. The stronger of the brethren in Christ should take pleasure in helping the weaker and the less able, and so far as possible in bringing all up to the stature of manhood in Christ.

Our Study is addressed to the Corinthian Church, and is on behalf of the Christians in and about Jerusalem. Naturally the question arises, "Why should collections have been then for the Christians in Jerusalem any more than for the Christians at Corinth? There were three reasons why this should be done: (1) A severe famine had prevailed in the vicinity of Jerusalem; (2) Jerusalem was not a commercial city, and therefore money was less plentiful there; (3) Apparently those in and about Jerusalem who received the Gospel were chiefly the poor.

Moreover, from the open persecution of the Truth there we can readily judge that there was also a great deal of quiet opposition to all who sympathized with the Gospel of Christ. As small shop people, they were probably boycotted; and as laborers, they were probably rejected as far as possible, except as necessity might demand their services. On the contrary, the cities of Asia Minor, Macedonia and Achaia were prosperous; and as far as we may judge, the class which accepted the Gospel was in many cases the better element. For instance, we recall the conversion of Sergius Paulus, the deputy governor at

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Paphos; that of Dionysius, one of the professors in the University of Athens; that of Damaris, of the same city; that of Justus, of Corinth, and of Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue of that city.

#### BLINDED BY RELIGIOUS PRIDE

The question naturally arises, Why should the same Gospel attract the well-to-do classes in Asia Minor and Greece and repel the majority outside the poor class in Judea? The answer would seem to be that amongst the Jews, who had been long acquainted with the true God and His gracious promises of Messiah, a religious pride had developed, especially amongst the wealthy and the learned. Moreover, because their religious system was in advance of every other religious system in the world, the learned attributed a like superiority to themselves individually. They "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others."--Luke 18:9.

This was the secret of Israel's blindness to the Gospel. The religious leaders and theologians were so self-conscious, and relied so implicitly upon their interpretations of the Divine promises as centering in themselves, that they could not regard the humble Nazarene and His unlearned followers except as impostors. Later, when the Gospel began to be preached to the Gentiles, the opposition of the Jewish theologians was increased; for it was

utterly contrary to every thought of their religious pride that God would accept either the humble Jews or the Gentiles to His favor, and reject themselves, the leading representatives of His Cause and work.--John 7:43-53.

Amongst the Gentiles, however, the case was very different. While the illiterate masses were firmly bound by the superstition of their various religions, those who were of an honest mind amongst the better educated were quick to discern that many features of their own religion were merely superstitions. Probably they had been somewhat attracted to the Jewish religion as being much more reasonable than their own; for we find that the Gentiles readily resorted to the Jewish synagogues. But the Jewish religion would necessarily be unsatisfactory to them, since it would appear to be very narrow, limiting the Divine blessings in a special manner to Israelites only--a people whom the Greeks considered rather inferiors in the arts of that time. But the Gospel, throwing wide open the door to those who desired righteousness--of every nation, people, kindred and tongue--would naturally commend itself to the class whom we are describing as being the most reasonable explanation of the Jewish doctrines and their grand eventual outcome, the meaning of which had long been hidden.

#### THE BENEFITS OF SYSTEMATIC CHARITY

At all events, the saints at Jerusalem were poorer than were the saints at Corinth. Therefore it was appropriate that the Apostle should suggest to the latter the propriety of sending a gift to the former. Living at a time when the conveniences for transferring money were very inferior to the very poorest known today, the various congregations could send their gifts only at the hand of the Apostle when he should go to Jerusalem the following year.

St. Paul's words intimate that the suggestion which he had made to the Corinthian brethren nearly a year before had been well received, and the collections zealously entered upon. For this reason it was superfluous for him to write in this connection any of the particulars respecting the necessity for this collection. But he hints to them that there was a bare possibility that the work zealously begun a year before might not have been patiently carried out; and that after he had boasted somewhat to others of their love and zeal for the Lord, he would regret, when he came to them en route to Jerusalem, if it should be found that, after all, they had failed to have their donation ready.

In his previous letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle had suggested methodical charity, saying, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given instructions to the Churches in Galatia, even so do ye. On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."--1 Corinthians 16:1,2.

It was the Apostle's experience, as it is the experience

of all thoughtful people, that systematic charity is better than spasmodic giving. Not only is the result generally larger, but the influence upon the giver is more beneficial; for it keeps before the mind an object, a service to be rendered as unto the Lord. With many, almost the only opportunity for serving the Lord's Cause is that of contributing money. Of course, where a consecrated child of God can do so, it is far better that he should give to the saints after the manner of St. Paul and his traveling associates--giving spiritual gifts and blessings, either by public preaching or by house-to-house visiting--presenting the Truth either by the printed page or by tongue or both.

But there are those so circumstanced in life through

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lack of talent or of strength or of opportunity--hindered by prior mortgages upon their time in the way of family obligations--that practically their only chance for serving the Lord and manifesting their love for Him is through their gifts to His Cause and to His people. For such to be deprived of the opportunity of exercising themselves in the Lord's service in this manner, either through lack of a case needing their assistance or through lack of instruction respecting this method of Divine service, would be to deprive them of an important opportunity of service, and correspondingly to deprive them of the blessings which follow every service rendered to the Lord.

#### LIBERALITY AN INDEX OF LOVE

We notice, therefore, that the Apostle felt very free to recommend to the Church the grace of giving and even to press upon them the fact that their liberality, in proportion to their ability, would in a large degree be an index of their love for the Lord and for the Gospel. But here we note, in contrast, the fact that the Apostle did not ask alms of these believers when first they received the Lord's grace, lest they should in any degree get the impression that the Gospel was being preached from mercenary motives--for filthy lucre's sake. Accordingly we find that rather than mention money the Apostle preached to these very same Corinthians for more than a year without even a suggestion as to remuneration; that rather than be chargeable to any, he labored with his own hands at his trade of tent-making.--2 Corinthians 11:7-9.

Let us also note the change which the full appreciation of the Gospel wrought upon the believers at Corinth. At first they were so negligent of their privilege that seemingly they never even thought of volunteering financial assistance to the Apostle while he was serving them by the labor of his own hands and receiving some assistance from believers in other places. But after the grace of God had entered more fully into their hearts, they began to appreciate the value of the Truth which they had received and to realize that it had brought them priceless

blessings of hope, joy, faith and character. Then they had a zeal, a "forwardness," to do something financially in the Lord's service.

And now that the Apostle was absent from them, and

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after his course had proved to them that he sought not their money but themselves, to do them good, he felt free to draw their attention to the great blessing which would result from liberality in the Lord's Cause in proportion to their ability and love. To impress this matter, he gave them a parable, saying, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully." This reminds us of the proverb, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is proper, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Proverbs 11:24,25.) The evident lesson is that the Lord is pleased to see His people cultivate breadth of heart as well as of mind--generosity in proportion to their knowledge of Him and of His generosity.

#### OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF OUR GIFTS

The Scriptures nowhere declare that cases of absolute privation amongst the Lord's people are proofs that at some time in their past life, when possessed of means, they failed to use a portion of it in charity, in the Lord's service. But the inspired words above quoted come very close to giving this lesson. At all events, it is profitable that we lay this testimony to heart and that every child of God henceforth shall be earnestly careful that out of the blessings of the Lord coming to us day by day some measure be carefully, prayerfully and lovingly laid aside as seed to be sown in the Lord's service according to the best wisdom and judgment which He will give us.

How many have such carefulness for themselves, either in using every penny as fast as it comes or in being so interested in laying by for the outworking of future plans, that they feel that they can spare nothing for charity! How many such can afterward see that they made a great mistake in so doing! When their accumulations suddenly vanish, either through sickness or through accident or bank failure or otherwise, then they have good reason to regret that they sowed no "seed" after the manner described by the Apostle in Verse 6 of today's Study.

Our Lord showed us how He measures our gifts--that He esteems them not according to the amount given, but chiefly according to the spirit which prompts the gift --when He drew attention to the poor widow who cast two mites into the Temple treasury. (Luke 21:1-4.) From the standpoint of His estimation, that poor widow had cast in a larger sum than had any of the wealthy who had given merely out of their abundance, and not to such an

extent that they felt it. How many of the Lord's people would be more "fat" spiritually today, if they would give attention to the exercise of this talent, this opportunity for service, we cannot say. The Lord alone knows. But today's Study makes it incumbent upon us to point out a privilege in this direction which is within the reach of the very poorest of the Lord's people.

#### A THANK-OFFERING TO THE LORD

Seldom is it necessary to caution people against over-much giving. Yet in some instances such caution is proper; and in some instances in Scripture giving has been restrained. No one should give to the extent of causing privation to those dependent upon him. Nor should any one give to such extent as to bring upon himself financial bankruptcy and cause losses to others. The Apostolic rule for giving we have already quoted. The "laying by on the first day of the week" should be general--"according as the Lord hath prospered him." The degree of our prosperity should be the measure of our charity. Upon this, as upon every subject, the Scriptures inculcate the spirit of a sound mind.

"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Gifts bestowed in any other than a cheerful spirit might just as well not be given; for they will bring no blessing. The Lord does not appreciate such giving. In His estimation it has no "sweet odor." To be appreciated of the Lord, the gift must be a thank-offering, prompted by a realization of our debt of everlasting gratitude to Him from whom cometh every good and every perfect gift. And to such, the Apostle assures us, "God is able to make all grace abound." Whoever gives anything in the Divine service--time, talent, strength, money or influence--will find himself proportionately abounding in the different graces; for such are in the right attitude of heart to grow in grace.

The Apostle seems to imply that such will have "sufficiency in all things," as well as be able to "abound in every good work." Sufficiency may not mean luxury and every comfort; but "all sufficiency" is gained always where there is "godliness with contentment." In proof that he is inculcating no new theory respecting the Divine care over those who are seeking to scatter to others a portion of the blessings that come to them, whether temporal or spiritual, the Apostle quotes from Psalm 112:9.

In Verse 11, the Apostle speaks of "being enriched in everything." We are not to understand him to mean that all of the Lord's people will be enriched financially. St. Paul himself was an example of the fact that the Lord's people do not become wealthy. He is speaking of the enrichment of the heart. In another place he speaks of himself and his colaborers in the Gospel work, "as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Corinthians 6:10.) These faithful servants of God made many rich in hope, rich in faith, rich in love and in all the various concomitant graces

which these qualities imply.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the grandest Example of self-denial in the interests of others. He was rich in the possession of the spiritual nature with all its glory and honor. Yet for our sakes He became poor, taking the human nature in order that He might redeem mankind. To this end He surrendered life itself at Calvary, that through His sacrifice we might become rich--possessed of Divine favor and the riches of Divine grace in Christ--even joint-heirship with Him who now is our exalted Lord at the right hand of Divine Majesty. But to attain this joint-heirship with Him, we must study to be like Him, to have His Spirit and to share with others whatever He may give us of either temporal or spiritual favors --either to feed or to clothe others (particularly those of the Household of Faith) temporally or spiritually, as circumstances may dictate.

"Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift!" That Gift is our Savior, our Redeemer. (John 3:16.) In this connection it is impossible for us to tell the riches of Divine grace toward us--the numberless blessings and mercies which are ours through our Lord. He represents to us the very fulness of every Divine provision for our eternal welfare. As the Apostle elsewhere says, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Deity bodily." (Colossians 2:9.) As yet, only the Church can now give thanks to God for His unspeakable Gift. But by and by the whole world of mankind will be in a condition to recognize that Gift and to render thanks. When, at the close of the Messianic Reign for the restoration of the Adamic race to their original perfection, all wilful sinners shall have been destroyed, then "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God." Then every creature in Heaven, on earth and in the sea shall be heard saying, "Praise, glory, honor, dominion and might be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, forever!" for the Unspeakable Gift.

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#### OFFICE OF ADVOCATE AND MEDIATOR CONTRASTED

THE fact that the Church is "the Mystery of God" has become more clear within the last twenty years. We know that Christ and the Church are separate and distinct from the world in every particular. They are neither under the old Law Covenant nor under the New Law Covenant, but are a peculiar people, called, sanctified, developed, under a special Covenant by themselves, in which none of the world will ever participate. This the Scripture styles the Covenant of Sacrifice: "Gather My saints [holy ones] together unto Me [saith the Lord];

those that have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5.) This special class of saints, or holy ones, who make the Covenant of Sacrifice have as their Head the Lord Jesus Himself. When this company shall have completed their Covenant by Sacrifice, this present Age will end. Moses of the Law Covenant given to Israel represented specially the Law Covenant which will be given to the world through the antitype of Moses--The Christ. In other words, the Mediator of the Law Covenant was one man; but the Mediator of the New Law Covenant of the Millennial Age is the new Man, of which Jesus is the Head--and the Apostle declares that the members are made up of those elected both from Jews and Gentiles.

From the time of Jesus down, the Mediator of the New Covenant has been in process of selection, and the "better sacrifices," as the basis for the New Covenant have been in process of offering. During this Gospel Age Jesus has not exercised His office as Mediator for the world; and the world has no relationship with God, but still lies in the Wicked One. The Mediator Himself has been in process of development. As the Apostle declares, God raised up Jesus first and since has been raising up the Church, and soon will finish the raising up. It is this Mediator or Prophet of whom St. Peter speaks in Acts 3:22,23. (See also 1 Timothy 2:5,6.) No mediating can be done until the Mediator of "many members" has qualified for the office. His qualification consists of His sacrificing, according to His Covenant of Sacrifice. The Christ, Head and Body, are, therefore, the Mediator for the world in a prospective sense--in the same sense as Jesus, the Babe, could be spoken of as the Savior and the King. He is only now becoming the King and has yet saved only a few of His people.

There is a wide distinction between the work of a mediator and the work of an advocate. The Great Mediator between God and man--The Christ of glory--will fill His mediatorial office for a thousand years and complete it only by the end of that time, when He will deliver over to the Father, fully reconciled, all who can be brought into harmony with the Divine arrangement. The work of an advocate is different, and according to the Bible, relates only to the work which Jesus accomplishes on behalf of the Church during this Age. The Church will need no advocate in the future. The world has no advocate now. "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." It is Jesus individually who is the Advocate for us--"the Church, His Body." He advocates our cause--first of all by imputing to us the merit of His sacrifice, thus making us presentable in the Father's presence and acceptable as sons of God. Because of this Advocacy, we have received the Holy Spirit and are New Creatures in Christ. As New Creatures we still need our Advocate, because we cannot do the things that we would--perfectly. We have imperfections of the flesh, which, as New Creatures, we cannot fully control. Hence we need a Throne of Grace and an Advocate through whom we may maintain

our present relationship with the Father, and thus not be condemned with the world.

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## CONSCIENCE AND THE WAR

IN PERHAPS all the armies participating in the present war men have been shot or imprisoned as a penalty for refusing on conscientious grounds to take up arms as soldiers.

We are not, therefore, to think of the British course at the present time on this subject as extreme. The fact is that, so far as we are aware, the United States and Great Britain are the only countries which have proposed by their law to recognize conscientious scruples on the part of their citizens as a reasonable basis for being excused from military duty.

Of course, no country forces aliens into the army; and were it recognized that true Christians are aliens as respects earthly governments, the whole question might solve itself. The Bible Students' claim is that the followers of Jesus have their citizenship in Heaven, and that by giving their obedience to the Heavenly Lord they renounce in a degree their allegiance to earthly kings--governments. It is for this reason that we have long advocated that the fully consecrated abstain from voting on political issues. If they so vote, they are identifying themselves with the earthly kingdoms, and might properly enough be called upon to shoot as they vote--to support the government which they helped to create.

On the other hand, the Scriptural proposition is that while our citizenship is in Heaven and we are aliens, strangers and foreigners in the world, with allegiance to the Heavenly King, nevertheless, like all other foreigners, we are to be subject to the powers that be--subject to the laws of the country in which we may be living. But if obedience to the laws does not imply military service on the part of the foreigner, so obedience to the laws on the part of Bible Students does not imply military duty. Similarly with the oath of allegiance required by those who enter the army--they are required to swear allegiance to the king and obedience to the officers of the king in all things. This oath is not required of aliens, foreigners, and is objected to by Bible Students, not because they are opposed to law and order or unwilling to be regulated by the government under which they live, but because they have already given allegiance to the higher power--the Heavenly Lord. To them His words, His commands, etc., are paramount.

Of course, such aliens could not object to deportation, nor make any stand for personal rights which any other alien of any other government might not request.



## PUBLIC SENTIMENT AROUSED

The papers inform us that the matter of conscientious objectors to military service is deeply stirring the British people and has led to several wordy battles in Parliament. The claim made is that the laws of Great Britain provide for the consciences of all British subjects and that while these laws seem to be complied with, by the appointment of commissioners to hear the conscientious objections, nevertheless the laws are really disregarded, because the judges appointed are military judges, whose interests are not judicial but military. Some of those who refused on conscientious grounds were sentenced to prison for two years at hard labor. Others were forced to put on military uniform, and were kicked and bruised by companions in the ranks, either because of their conscientious loyalty to the Word of the great King or because they refused to swear allegiance to the British king and obedience to

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his officers. Others were sent to the army in France, the threat being made that if they did not do their duty they would be shot forthwith.

All this is arousing British sentiment on this subject--for and against warfare. No doubt the courage, the witness, the martyr spirit on the part of the Lord's consecrated people will exercise a great influence and will lead to a more careful study of the commands of our King and the rules governing all who are under His banner. Whatever hardships may come to these dear brethren, we believe that a blessing will result in showing forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

In the meantime, it is not for us to exert force in opposition, nor to shout loudly about our rights. We are to remember that, in becoming soldiers of the Cross, we voluntarily gave up all earthly rights in order that we might be participators with the Captain of our salvation, who permitted all of His rights to be taken from Him, even unto death. As the followers of Jesus are made a spectacle to the world and to angels, they are also permitted to strengthen and build up one another in the most holy faith by their love and zeal for the Lord and His Message. We may well remember our privilege of praying one for another under such circumstances. We may not pray for the Lord to hinder others or ourselves from having trials or tests along these lines, for it is for the Divine Wisdom to determine what these shall be, but it is our privilege to pray for each other and for ourselves--to pray for that grace to help in every time of need which the Lord has promised He will grant.--Hebrews 4:16.

May a very faithful witness, then, be given with great humility and with great sympathy to those who take a different view from ourselves! They hold that Christ's

Kingdom has been set up; and that the present kings of Europe are of Divine appointment, as they claim upon their coins, and that for them to be at war is for God's Kingdom to be at war; and that their soldiers are God's soldiers. Inconsistently they fail to see that if their contentions be true, God's Kingdom is divided and God is fighting against Himself! A little while, and the dawning of the New Dispensation will be clearer. Then all nations will come to see that the need of mankind is the Rule of the Heavenly Lord with all power. By that time the Bride of Christ will have passed beyond the veil. Crowns of glory and palms of victory will have been bestowed, and the time for blessing the world of mankind will have come.

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#### AT PEACE AMONGST YOURSELVES

WE HAVE all heard the proverb, "Diamond cut Diamond." All jewels are very hard as well as very pure. This hardness enhances their value. The Lord's people are all jewels--not only are they purified by the Lord's grace, but they have crystallized characters. This being true, as we have previously pointed out, there is more danger of cutting and scratching when they are together than there would be with materials less hard. Putty and clay do no cutting--neither do characters of putty-like quality.

Remembering this, the Lord's people should be very sympathetic with each other and very appreciative of each other. We learn to appreciate, as the Lord does, positiveness of character, strength of character, fixity of purpose, even though at times these qualities of character may cause some trouble. No wonder then that Berean Bible Classes have their difficulties sometimes, as well as do worldly organizations!

#### THE LORD'S PEOPLE NOT STRIFE-BREEDERS

Nevertheless, the Lord's people are to remember the special injunction of their Master that they should be peace-makers and not strife-breeders. It requires no great skill to stir up trouble. It requires considerable of meekness, gentleness, patience, and the other qualities of the Holy Spirit amongst the Lord's people to prevent strife, even with only the best of intentions prevailing. How much we all need to be on guard lest the Adversary tempt us, mislead us from the paths of peace!

It requires considerable experience and the wisdom that cometh from Above to enable us to judge rightly whether a matter of difference between others and ourselves

is a question of principle, where some fundamental truth is at stake, or whether it is merely a question of opinion and preference without principle being involved. In the latter case, we should be willing to submit to practically anything for the sake of peace, whereas we could not do so where principles would be involved. However, the delusion is often presented to us that our preferences are always backed up by principles of truth and righteousness. We must learn from experience that this is a mistake, and must critically examine every such suggestion, asking the Lord's wisdom to enable us to see the difference between that which is merely our preference and those questions which involve principles and teachings of Divine origin.

For instance, in a Class there are often brethren or sisters who critically insist on a matter being done in a certain way, because that had been the previous custom or because they believe it to be the better way. They are ready to precipitate a quarrel unless their preference is followed. The wiser course is to waive our preference in favor of the preferences of others, if they are insistent, provided the right result is reached--namely, provided the will of the Class is really attained; for the will of the Class is to be taken as the will of the Lord--or if not that, the Lord will overrule the matter and bring a lesson to us out of it for the Class.

Each and every member of a Class should earnestly strive to promote in a Class fruits of the Holy Spirit--meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love, joy, peace. This promoting is to be done by remembering these qualities and exercising them ourselves, thus setting an example to others and showing forth the influence of the Holy Spirit operating in our own hearts and lives.

#### A FREQUENT MISTAKE

Too often the mistake is made of thinking that the whole weight of responsibility rests upon us--forgetting that our responsibility ends when we have exercised our judgment and have acted upon it.

Lack of faith in the Lord is closely associated with the error of bringing strife into a Class on some technical grounds. We should remember the Lord's interest in the Class and in all of His people, and that He is able and willing to overrule our experiences for good--likewise the experiences of others. If, therefore, matters are not going exactly to our pleasement in the Class, it will be better for us, and often for all, that we take the matter to the Lord in prayer, rather than that we should be continually nagging or fault-finding with that which is or which appears to be, satisfactory to the others, or at least to the majority of the Class.

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## MILITARISM AND CONSCIENCE

WHILE Christians are enjoined to be subject to the "Powers that be"--the kings, governors, magistrates, etc.--nevertheless this is not to be understood as meaning the renouncement of our fidelity to the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is our Over-Lord. Our allegiance to earthly lords and powers and their commands is merely to the extent that they do not conflict with the commands of our Over-Lord. The Jews in renouncing Jesus cried, "We have no king but Caesar"! The Christian's position is, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, but unto God the "things that are God's". Whenever Caesar and his laws conflict with the Divine requirements, all true soldiers of the Cross are left no alternative.

It is not for us to set up standards for others. Conscience is an individual matter. It would be as wrong for Bible Students to antagonize earthly governments, and to oppose enlistments in the army and navy under the call of earthly governments, as it would be wrong for others to force their opinions upon Bible Students, contrary to our consciences. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. Bible Students are to remember that they are citizens of the Heavenly Kingdom and are not to specially insist upon their earthly rights, except such as might be reasonably expected by foreigners. Messiah's Kingdom is not to be established by the sword of Bible Students, nor by their angry declamations against others, nor by their violation of the laws of the land in which they may be residing, nor by any hostility to the governments which undertake to guarantee their lives and happiness. We are to be subject to these governments. We are to appreciate them. But all this will not break our relationship to the Heavenly King and His commands. These come first with Bible Students--each according to his own conscience in respect to the meaning of the Lord's Word.

At the present time in Great Britain many of the dear Brethren are enduring trying experiences with great loyalty. Imprisonment at hard labor is severe punishment for a law-abiding alien who merely refuses to engage in war because his Over-Lord has so commanded. Yet the sufferings of the faithful are, perhaps, still greater in other directions. One is in a very trying position when the finger of scorn is pointed at him; when he is proclaimed a coward; when he is discharged from the employment which brings him daily bread, while others who take to the sword are cheered. Not questioning the valor and courage in the latter, we believe that it requires still more courage to be in the ranks of the former--to stand loyal to the King of kings when opposed by the scorn of our neighbors and friends.

We are sure, nevertheless, that the Lord is bringing a blessing to all who are seeking faithfully to know and to



TO THE RT. HON. H.H. ASQUITH, M.P.

SIR:--As a British Chartered Association known as The International Bible Students Association, and as law-abiding citizens of the United Kingdom, we desire to petition you, the Head of His Majesty's Government, craving your good offices to secure consideration at the hands of the Government for those members of this Association whose consciences will not permit of their undertaking Military duties of any description, to the intent that they be granted permission to undertake work of National importance as prescribed by the Government Committee, and already granted to some other citizens who are also Conscientious Objectors on similar grounds. We think it right to explain that no pressure of any kind against Militarism is brought to bear upon its members by this Association; all alike are free to act as led by their own conscience, so that their cases are those of genuine personal conviction.

At the present time there are at least 40 of our members in Military Prisons under sentences varying from a few days to two years with hard labor, and we are informed that eight have been sent to France. These men state that nothing can cause them to change their attitude towards Militarism, and their actions, thus far, are in harmony with this statement. Almost every day adds to the number incarcerated, and the extension of the Act to affect married men will increase the number still more in the future. Permit us to submit for consideration the fact that these men are at present an expense to the Country and a trouble to the Authorities, whereas their services are available for the public weal if permitted to undertake work apart from Military control.

We feel it is only proper to state that this Association, which is affiliated in its religious work with the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY of America, is not allied with any other body--political or religious--which is opposed to Militarism, and to state further that we have no intention of allying ourselves with any such body.

Accompanying this we send lists containing 5,000 signatures to this Petition; also a list of names of those of our members known to us as being incarcerated, praying the Government to extend to these their clemency by granting them also the desired exemption from Military control.

Yours faithfully, INT. BIBLE STUDENTS ASS'N.

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#### BEREAN LESSONS AND PILGRIM VISITS

SOME inquire what they shall do when a Pilgrim visit happens to be on the same night as the regular Berean Study--explaining that sometimes they must get behind as to Berean Lessons. Our advice is that unless there is some

essential reason against it, the Berean Lessons should take precedence and the Pilgrim Brother conduct the meeting, giving example of a profitable Berean Lesson. The same thing applies to the Wednesday evening Prayer and Testimony meeting. This should go on as usual, the Pilgrim leading, unless for some special reason; as, for instance, if the Pilgrim's appointment be but for one night. We esteem that there are no more important services held by Bible Students than these two, and regularity is an important feature in connection with these meetings.

We take this occasion to express the hope that all the dear friends who have taken the Vow read it publicly or privately every morning, and that the MANNA TEXT every morning be not forgotten. Some additionally read the MORNING RESOLVE. Thousands of letters from dear brethren and sisters all over the world testify the great blessings in connection with these endeavors to keep close to the Lord. The Prayer Circle formed by the Vow is perhaps one of the most wonderful things that has ever been in the world. Think of it! approximately twenty thousand consecrated people of God praying for one another and for the Harvest work every day. The blessing that this is bringing to them is almost inestimable; it is a blessing that maketh rich indeed.

Those who are not using the Manna daily are losing a great blessing; and those who do not participate in the Wednesday evening Testimony Meeting whose topic is the Manna Text of the preceding Thursday are missing a rich blessing. As many as believe that we are now in the Evil Day of special trial upon the Church of God should appreciate these meetings--drawing very near to the Lord and to each other daily. If you have not done so before, we urge that you make a start forthwith.

While thus exhorting, we are prompted to remind our dear readers in general that quite a good many are making it a practice to read at least twelve pages of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES each day, thus completing the entire six volumes every year. Reports show that great blessings of knowledge and of grace follow this course.

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#### PILGRIM BARTON GONE HOME

BROTHER BENJAMIN H. BARTON has been on the Pilgrim staff of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY for quite a good many years, and is widely and very favorably remembered by our readers. Although always apparently frail, Brother Barton had a strong voice, and by the Lord's grace was able to do very efficient service up to about June 1st. We then heard from him that he had not been very well and was obliged to cancel future appointments

in Oregon. He was kindly entertained by the friends, and everything possible for his comfort was attended to, but he continued to grow weak and, without special pain or suffering of any kind, so far as we have learned, passed away on Saturday, June 24th. His remains were shipped to the residence of his parents in Philadelphia, where they were interred Monday, July 3d.

The Editor has most kindly remembrances of dear Brother Barton, not only as a faithful servant of the Lord, of the Truth, of the brethren, but also as a personal friend. The knowledge of the Truth, heart-abounding grace, the spirit of a sound mind, all contributed to the development in Brother Barton of a very noble character, highly esteemed amongst the friends in general, and especially amongst those who knew him best. We will miss him greatly; nevertheless we also greatly rejoice on his behalf, believing that he has passed beyond the veil, has experienced his resurrection change, and with the others of the faithful will henceforth be forever with the Lord. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." --Revelation 14:13.

As one by one the number beyond the veil increases and the members this side correspondingly decrease, the great privilege of being servants of God and being found faithful as such looms larger and larger before our mental vision. We know not which of us will next be called to enter into the joys of our Lord in full, but we trust that all of the truly consecrated are in the waiting attitude, expecting, hoping, longing for the resurrection change, which the Apostle assures us is necessary, because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom," shortly to be established.--1 Cor. 15:50.

It is remarkable that as we near the consummation of this Age, and the completion of the Church, the opportunities for serving the Household of Faith seem to increase. And while old, active servants are passing beyond, new, loyal, zealous successors are being found by the Truth. Thus the work on this side the veil is going grandly on.

Well did the Apostle write that the Lord's true people, enlightened, encouraged and fortified by the promises in the Divine Word, "sorrow not as do others" in the presence of the great foe--DEATH.

#### BROTHER BAKER'S REPORT

This morning, June 24, at Portland, Ore., Brother Barton passed to his reward at 1:15. His end came suddenly, even though his low vitality and weakness gave evidence of his grave condition. Friday he appeared somewhat brighter than usual, sitting up for twenty minutes, after which he asked to lie down to sleep, as he felt tired. That evening he ate a hearty meal (for him), and talked hopefully of starting home soon. The Brother's mind was apparently clear until the last, but he could not articulate well, owing to trouble due to a slight stroke of paralysis about four weeks ago. As death approached the cares of his season of illness seemed



to vanish and his features relaxed, and, with a smile on his lips, he passed into the Kingdom. Friday afternoon he expressed to Sister Baker his love for the brethren at the Bethel and particularly for dear Brother Russell, and that it was his hope to see them again. His only care has been

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his mother. The desire to see and comfort her again probably did much to retain the slight hold he had on life for some weeks.

The opportunity of serving the Brother has been a great blessing to all here, and while individual privileges of service were limited for obvious reasons, the privilege of serving his spiritual interests through prayer has greatly blessed all. His cheerful, patient endurance of his physical disability, his desire to please and his efforts to keep himself from being burdensome to those about, will prove a lasting lesson to all. Our loss has been his gain. How appropriate today's MANNA TEXT!

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#### THE ST. LOUIS CONVENTION

ALTHOUGH the attendance at the St. Louis Convention --June 22-25--was not large, it was an enthusiastic gathering and gave strong evidence of the Master's blessing. The Apostle's exhortation, "Be ye filled with the Spirit," seems to have been quite well realized by those in attendance. The exhibitions of the PHOTODRAMA OF CREATION in the evening were a very happy feature of the Convention. The pictures and the lectures--the Bible story from Creation to Restoration--seem to have a charm for Bible Students everywhere. Like the charm of God's Word, they never grow stale.

The Convention attendance varied from three hundred and fifty to six hundred and fifty, aside from the public meeting on the closing night. It was held in the Odeon Theatre and was addressed by the Editor of this journal. The house was crowded to its capacity, twenty-three hundred, and at the same time an overflow meeting of Bible Students was held in the Convention Hall to the number of about six hundred. At the close of both meetings, about 10:30 p.m., Brother Russell came into the Convention Theatre. He was welcomed with the Chautauqua Salute--the waving of handkerchiefs, while the familiar old hymn was sung with zest:

"Blest be the tie that binds  
Our hearts in Christian love."

After a few words of greeting and reference to the Convention

and its conclusion and the hope for blessings upon those present and the dear ones at the home towns represented by them, Brother Russell arranged the Love Feast, in which nearly all participated with many manifestations of earnest Christian love and zeal. Thus happily, joyfully, the First General Convention of the season came to an end.

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