
CONTENTS

How We May Grow Up Into Christ . . . 323
 Natural Qualities That Need Restraint 324
 Cultivation of Love Especially Needful 325
 Presenting the Message of the Kingdom . 325
 Begging for the Lord Not Authorized . 326
 Some Timely Words of Caution . . . 327
 "The Hour of Temptation" 327
 "Take Heed to Yourselves" 327
 "Deceiving and Being Deceived" . . 328
 Remember Doctrinal Tests Also . . 329
 The V. D. M. Questions 330
 Supposed Objections Answered . . 330
 World-Wide Pastoral Work 331
 Work in Which Sisters May Cooperate . 331
 Hints to Those in Large Cities . . 332
 Hints to District Workers 332
 District Workers' Canvass 333
 District Book Loaning 334
 Some Questions Answered 334
 New Opportunities of Service . . . 335

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

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

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$1.00 (4s.) IN ADVANCE.
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ANGELOPHONE HYMN RECORDS

In our issue of June 15, 1916, we announced arrangements by which our readers may obtain the Angelophone at Jobbers' prices, one-third of the usual retail prices--\$8.33, \$16.67, \$33.33, instead of \$25.00, \$50, \$100.

Now we have a still more important announcement--Angelophone Records of 50 of our most beautiful hymns. They gave us the selection of them. We are confident that all WATCH TOWER readers will appreciate them, and believe that they will have a very wide circulation everywhere. They are 7-inch records, "hill and dale cut," of a size which usually sells for 35c up. But, indeed, such hymns and in such variety are not to be had anywhere for any money.

The Singer's voice is excellent, clear, distinct--quite unlike hymn tunes you have usually heard, very few of which can be understood. They are the work of Prof. Henry Burr, the well-known barytone.

NOW THE ASTONISHING FEATURE!

The entire set of 50 hymns can be ordered through us for \$5--only ten cents per record.

With a view to stimulating daily family worship (having this excellent singer's voice to lead), the hymns with music have been published in neat, attractive form at 5c and 10c per copy, according to binding--postage 2c extra.

At our request the Angelophone Company are mailing to the Secretaries of the principal classes a sample record and a sample each of the two hymn-books. If a quantity of the books and records are ordered together, carriage charges will be prepaid in the United States. These records are known as the original "hill and dale cut," the same as the ones used by Edison and Pathe. It contains a great deal more music to the inch than the zigzag cut. The latter is used by the Victor and was gotten out to avoid the patents covering the original, superior "hill and dale cut"; said patents have now expired.

The Angelophone has a reversible sound-box, which permits it to play any kind of record made. But not so the Victor and Columbia machines: to use the Angelico records on them, a little sleeve is necessary, which can be purchased at any 10c store, or can be ordered with the books and records. Address orders to ANGELICO, 28 West 63d Street, New York City, or to 184 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, New York.

* * * *

It affords us genuine pleasure to think that Bible Students can now have in their homes phonograph music which really represents their sentiments--much better than does the majority of the jiggy, rag-time stuff usually sold at from 60c to \$1 per record.

"A little nonsense now and then,
Is relished by the best of men;"
But nonsense all the time nauseates even the worldly. On the other

hand, there is a sweet, quieting influence exerted by the beautiful hymns of our selection which go to the heart of old and young, saint and sinner. Surely, Bible Students will wish to "Lift high the Royal banner," and to show forth the praises of their King! And such hymns as these in so clear and distinct a voice will surely appeal to your neighbor, too.

We are glad that these records have come out in time for the Holiday Season and the longer winter evenings. We have warned the Angelophone Company to be prepared for many large orders to be shipped out promptly. We vouch for the Angelophone Company that you may safely send the money for whatever you may wish to order, by P.O. Order.

PILGRIM BROTHER JOHNSON IN GREAT BRITAIN

Classes in Great Britain desiring appointments will please communicate with our London Office.

THE WATCH TOWER IN GERMAN

The war has interfered greatly with the regular arrivals of the German WATCH TOWER. To meet the difficulty we have started to issue a German edition from Brooklyn. Our German Brethren will please note this and act accordingly. We expect to continue it only until the mail service from Germany becomes regular again. Our American edition is a monthly in two sections--\$1.00 per year, two copies to each subscriber.

NOTE A CORRECTION

In Oct. 15 Tower, p. 312, referring to three classes for whom Jesus becomes Surety or Guarantor, the reading should be:

"Our great Advocate, the High Priest, having endorsed for all of these, will thus be ultimately free from all liability for them in that they all will have died according to the flesh and none of them will receive or retain Restitution rights or privileges. Those Restitution blessings will be fully and completely released when the last member of the Spirit-begotten shall have gone into death."

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BETHEL HYMNS FOR DECEMBER

After the close of the hymn the Bethel family listens to the reading of "My Vow Unto the Lord," then joins in prayer. At the breakfast table the MANNA text is considered. Hymns for December follow: (1) 293; (2) 191; (3) 313; (4) 145; (5) 1; (6) 71; (7) 130; (8) 230; (9) 83; (10) 197; (11) 172; (12) 299; (13) 328; (14) 50; (15) 326; (16) 333; (17) 104; (18) 106; (19) 195; (20) 129; (21) 43; (22) 303; (23) 87; (24) 195; (25) 16;

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R5977 : page 323

HOW WE MAY GROW UP INTO CHRIST

"Speaking the Truth in love,...grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ."--Ephesians 4:15.

IN PROPORTION as any who seek to know God are led to see His true character, they have confidence in Him. After such have come to the point of full consecration to the Lord, they receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and become of the Church class, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, the set apart ones --set apart by the Holy Spirit. Of these the Apostle Paul says, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear." The New Creature must repel every attack of servile fear--which belongs to the flesh, the fallen condition. The new mind must triumph over this natural tendency, must cultivate trust in the Lord.

No man could do more than take away our earthly life. No man can take away our future life. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body." So the child of God is to be very courageous, knowing that no one can do him harm, knowing that God will not permit anything to come to him that will not be for his good. The enlightened child of God would have no fear, or dread, of eternal torment. He would still have proper fear such as a husband would have toward a wife, or a wife toward a husband--a fear of displeasing or disappointing, and thus losing the esteem and confidence of the companion.

In respect to all the brethren we should have such fear. We should have a filial fear toward God, but not with the thought that He would harm us or torment us or do us violence of any kind, but fear lest we should lose our fellowship with Him. So, then, whatever fear we have of a slavish kind is not from God. Such fear brings a snare. But love, inspired by a true knowledge of God, and begotten of His Spirit, delivers us also from the fear of man, in proportion as this love abounds in us.

God has given us the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of power. The Christian knows that "all things work together for good to them that love God." This is to him a source of power, of strength. Circumstances and conditions which would quite overwhelm others, he may expect to have. This spirit is not only a spirit of power, but a spirit of love--a spirit of kindness and gentleness. It is a spirit that loves to do good, to do right, to be helpful. And so the Christian with this spirit of love and of a sound mind becomes more

and more Godlike. This enables him to have more and more compassion for those who are out of the way. And as God sent His Son, and as the Son came and provided the blessing of life for all at such a great cost to Himself, so all who have His spirit will strive to bless others.

EVIDENCES OF A SOUND MIND

The fall of Adam has worked ruin to mankind, so that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there

R5978 : page 323

are none sound. (Isaiah 1:5,6.) None are sound of mind or body. All are out of the way. "There is none righteous; no, not one." (Romans 3:10.) But in proportion as we receive the Spirit of the Lord, and in proportion as that Spirit of the Lord works in us and develops us and influences all the conduct of life, in that same proportion we receive the spirit of a sound mind.

This soundness of mind will teach us how better to use our bodies. A person of unsound mind may either eat too much or eat what does not agree with him. In proportion as we have a sound mind, it influences what we eat, what we drink, and everything we do; it helps to regulate and control everything in life for us. It gives us broad views of all the affairs of life. It gives us more generous views of mankind. We recognize that mankind are under the curse, and we have a feeling of compassion for them. We have much advantage every way, because God has opened the eyes of our understanding.

This spirit of a sound mind makes us more helpful. We know better how to deal with each other as brethren. We know better how to deal with our children, with our neighbors, with the butcher, with the ice man and with every one else. The Truth does not come to many of those who are naturally soundest of mind, and it takes time for the Truth to bring in a measure of soundness. But we notice that when one receives the Truth in the love of it, it has a healing effect on his mind. He will begin to think more correctly and to act more wisely.

Then he will desire to proclaim the Truth. The Truth is to be spoken humbly, but fearlessly. The Christian is not at liberty to speak contrary to the Truth. If he is a professed minister of the Gospel, when the Truth reaches him, he is not at liberty to continue to preach error just because the congregation appointing him might not desire the Truth. A worldling in that pulpit would have no qualms of conscience. He would say, "I am giving these people the very things they want. They are paying my salary." That would be his attitude because he had not received the spirit of the Truth.

One who had received the spirit of the Truth would say, "I now see that some of the things I have been preaching for years are injurious, dishonoring to God, misrepresenting His character, and more or less turning

people away from the Truth. I have been teaching error, the very opposite of what I wish to do; I cannot longer

R5978 : page 324

dispense these errors. I am not the ambassador of this denomination; I am the ambassador of God. I am not the servant of this denomination; I am the servant of God, of the Truth. If I should preach error, that which would be contrary to the Truth, I would be guilty before God. I must stop immediately."

Such a person would lose his standing--honor amongst men, favor, influence, etc. But all this is not to be considered. St. Paul says that these things are all but as loss and dross, are but vile refuse, if we can only win a place in the Kingdom. Then we shall have won the "pearl of great price." So, then, the speaking of the Truth is essential to the Christian. In his own heart, of course, he must have it enshrined. When he has received the Truth into his heart, he will esteem it a blessed privilege to speak it.

Our tongue is the most powerful member of our body. Its influence is the greatest of all--the most far-reaching. It may be an influence for good or for injury. The Apostle says that with the same tongue we may praise God and injure men. To speak the Truth, to confess Christ before men, either publicly or privately, is a great privilege. But in order to be a servant pleasing to the Lord, we must speak the Truth in love and without fear.

In this connection the Apostle calls attention to the fact that we are not to expect to be mature in these respects at the beginning of our Christian way. When we first enter the family of God, less might reasonably be expected of us than after we had been in the family for some time. We as dear children of God are to grow in the likeness of our dear Elder Brother, our Pattern, our Head. We are to "grow up into Him in all things." We are to recognize that He is the Head of the Church. And if we are to be members of that Body in glory, we must be developed. We are to mature in the fruits of the Holy Spirit, that we may be qualified and prepared to share in future that glorious Kingdom which is to bless the world.

"EXPRESSION DEEPENS IMPRESSION"

We are to exercise our function of ambassadorship--we are to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." And in telling this Message courageously and lovingly we should grow in grace and in knowledge. We are to proclaim the Truth, and at the same time to grow and develop in character. Why attain a growth of character? Because it will make us more like God. "God is love." He has other qualities; but this quality of love is the especially predominating, the overruling quality of His character. God's Justice operates in conjunction with His Love, and His

Wisdom would not attempt to carry out any plans that Love would not approve.

And so as we grow, the quality of love should be more and more manifest. The Truth is to be spoken in love. This is one of the things we should attain earliest. We are to curb, to bridle, our tongues. We are to see that our words are loving, kind, gentle. Speaking the Truth in love, we shall not only be accomplishing more for others, but the lesson will also thus be more impressed upon our own minds. It has been well said that "expression deepens impression." Whoever appreciates and speaks forth these things of God in love will receive a blessing in his own heart and mind. In helping others he will be helping himself. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."

NATURAL QUALITIES THAT NEED RESTRAINT

We see a difficulty in this respect in some of the stronger characters that come into Christ. There are characters that have less combativeness naturally, who would not be inclined to bring force to bear upon others in connection with their ambassadorship. If their Message did not seem to be favorably received, they would be likely to feel, "They do not like this, so I will not talk on this subject." But those who have more combativeness are liable to manifest the force of their disposition in the way they present the Truth. They might be too forceful; they might place the matter before others as an obligation.

But we are to remember that consecration is not now a compulsory matter. It is an invitation. By and by force will be needed. The ones who are now sought are merely those who have the ear to hear; and such need only to have the word of counsel. If any use too great force in presenting the Message, the Great King would not be so well served, and hence would not be so well pleased.

Others may have great approbateness. They might have pride and wish to show off in the way of language, or in their skill in handling the Sword of the Spirit. They might give out the Message with the idea of rousing in others the thought, "See how much he knows; he is a wonderful digger in the Bible." This seems to be a temptation to many. They seem to like to be in the lime-light, just as others like to keep out of the lime-light.

The one might have to force himself in order to go and speak the Truth in public as an ambassador; while the other would have to curb himself somewhat in this respect. The only way for the latter to do is to learn to speak the Truth in humility, in love--the love of the Truth, the love of the brethren. It is God's Plan, we have nothing whereof to boast. We are always to present His Plan in meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love.

The Apostle Paul urges that we "consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works." The word provoke here means to stimulate, to call forth. Love is not easily called forth to anger. It is longsuffering. We might say, strictly speaking, that it is not the quality

of love that would be moved to anger. Yet righteous anger is not incompatible with love. God is the highest representation we have of love--"God is Love." Yet the Scriptures assure us that God is angry with the wicked every day. His anger is righteous indignation against sin.

Looking to God as the Great Example, we see that His love was manifested toward His creatures in the beginning. It was love for humanity that provided the Garden of Eden with all its blessings and its perfect life, just as for the angels His love provided for all their blessings. But when sin came in, Love stepped back; in other words, Justice was the special attribute of God then manifested. Yet it was for the good of mankind that there should be this punishment for sin. Even here God's Love persisted, though man had by sin become an opponent of God--an enemy of God; and Love was provoked to anger.

The Lord said through the Prophet, "Why have they provoked Me to anger?" (Jeremiah 8:19.) Many Scriptures speak of God's anger. The anger of God has been against sin. It has been resting upon the world for six thousand years. But the Love of God has not been violated by this; therefore Love can be provoked to anger.

"Love is not easily provoked." It required the act of intentional disobedience on the part of Father Adam to provoke God to anger. It was not because Mother Eve was deceived that the sentence came upon the world. The anger of God came upon the world, and the sentence of death was pronounced, because of Father Adam's sin, which was committed with full knowledge. During these six thousand years of sin God's Love has been in abeyance, so to speak, provoked to the point of withholding its manifestation.

R5979 : page 325

But all the while God's character has not changed. He did not cause the diabolical conditions which prevailed in the Dark Ages. Love would never sanction sin. "The wages of sin is death." And everything that goes with death is a part of that penalty, that sentence. But God has permitted these conditions for man's ultimate good. This love of God, held in abeyance, has bided its time to manifest itself to our race.

In due time God sent forth His Son to be man's Redeemer. He came and gave His life a willing sacrifice for human sin. In due time the call went forth to gather the Church. And this Church is being gathered--during this Gospel Age. In due time the Church will be exalted in Kingdom glory. In due time that Kingdom will lift up from sin and degradation all those of mankind who are willing to accept life on God's terms.

CULTIVATION OF LOVE ESPECIALLY NEEDFUL

How earnestly we need to watch and pray, that we

may indeed be fitted for our great future work! There is a danger that love will not be sufficiently strong in us; for by reason of the fall sin and selfishness have come to be preponderating influences. These principles, having the ascendancy, and operating for six thousand years, have made man very lacking in love, sympathy, brotherly-kindness and long-suffering. Now there is a greater natural tendency toward anger, malice, strife, hatred, than toward love. Consequently, when God accepts us into His family He tells us that one of the first requirements is love. Love must grow in our hearts and minds; it must permeate all our thoughts, words and actions.

The Apostle in speaking of love as respects the Church assures us that if we would be pleasing to the Lord we must develop this grace richly. Those who possess this quality in goodly measure will not be easily provoked to anger. Those who possess little love will be easily angered. The love which the Lord appreciates is long-suffering. This does not mean that there would not be proper occasions for anger in God's people. There should be a feeling of righteous indignation when we see injustice. Why? Because injustice is wrong. God is angry with injustice; and so God's people should have no sympathy with injustice in any form.

If the Lord's people do not cultivate the quality of justice, they will get into that attitude where they will not appreciate justice at all. While knowing what is right and what is wrong, and while appreciating justice, we are to cultivate the quality of love. None can say that his own estimate of justice is altogether right and the other man's is entirely wrong. None can say, "I do not need to cultivate this quality, but my brother needs it." But each should think, "Here is a brother--perhaps he labors under greater disadvantages than I have to strive against. He is a brother of mine according to the spirit. He seems to me to be doing wrong, but I sympathize with him because he probably does not see that it is wrong. On the other hand, it is possible that I may be wrong myself."

LET US HAVE SYMPATHY FOR ALL MEN

God has no sympathy with sin. But He has so much sympathy for the sinner that He has provided His Son to uplift the sinners, and has set apart a thousand years for the work of uplift. We note injustice. We ought to note it. But it is not for us to flay, to inflict the punishments. It is for us to leave the punishments to the Almighty. We are, therefore, to "judge nothing before the time." We see wrongs committed. We say, "I know that to be a crime; but it is not for me to settle with the criminal. God knows to what extent he is responsible; I do not. It is my duty to look at him from the standpoint of sympathy. It is my duty to pray for him and to assist him all in my power--out of his wrong views into right views. But even in this I am to be wise as a serpent, harmless as a dove. I may know that such conduct is wrong, but I cannot

know as to the individual--how wrong he may be."

So love looks out and sees that the whole world is in much difficulty through the fall. And love says, "Be gentle toward all--be meek. I am ever to remember that we are in a world of sin, pain, sickness, death." From this viewpoint love will not be easily provoked, but will think kindly and sympathetically of others. So, dear brethren, let us grow up into our glorious Head in all things, until, made perfect and complete, we are "presented faultless before the presence of His glory, with exceeding joy."--Jude 24.

"The time is short! Then be thy heart a brother's
To every heart that needs thy help in aught.
How much they need the sympathy of others!
The time, the time is short!"

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R5979 : page 325

PRESENTING THE MESSAGE OF THE KINGDOM

"Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house; and if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; but if not, it shall turn to you again."--Luke 10:5,6.

WHEN our Lord Jesus sent forth the seventy to proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom, the above words were a part of the instruction which He gave them. He sent them out without special preparation in the way of money or extra clothing. They were to find those in Israel who would have an ear for God's Message then due to be presented--the "Israelites indeed." These would gladly entertain them free of charge. In this respect Oriental countries are somewhat different from those of the Occident. Hospitality is more characteristic of the people of the Far East than of those of Europe and America. This was true of Palestine in the days of Jesus.

When the seventy returned from their mission, our Lord asked them whether they had lacked anything. They replied that they had lacked nothing at all. Jesus had instructed them that their Message was to be a house-to-house Message--not a public one--not given in the streets or in the public squares. The disciples were to go about seeking the worthy of each city which they visited. When they came to a house, they were first to say, "Peace be to this house!" If they were kindly received, their peace was to abide; if not, their peace was to return to them; it should not rest upon that house.

This form of salutation sounds rather peculiar to us; for it is not our custom to use this style of greeting. But it is still customary in Eastern countries to salute one another thus, not only in the houses, but in the street or by the way. People will say to one another, "Peace be to you

this morning." Nearly every one salutes, and nearly all say something of this kind. We remember how surprised we were when visiting Palestine first, in 1892. Our guide was well known in that country; and as we passed along the street people would address him in the Arabic language, and he would reply. We afterwards asked him, "What did they say to you?" He answered that they said, "Peace be unto you;" or, "God's blessing be with you." We were surprised that the people there would so generally speak in this gracious manner. We could scarcely turn into a road without receiving some kind of salutation.

We have something akin to this, however, in our salutation,

R5979 : page 326

"Good day," or "How do you do?" or, "We wish you good day," etc. These phrases express much the same sentiment. In the case of Jesus' disciples their salutation was to prove a test to the people as they went from house to house throughout Israel. If they were well received, they were to abide at the house where they had been made welcome, and not change from house to house during their stay in the place. If the people manifested no interest in them or their Message, they were to proceed on their journey. If they should go over a whole city this way, and find no one ready to welcome them, no one to lend an ear as they proclaimed, "The Kingdom of God is at hand," they were to leave the place, figuratively shaking the dust of that city from their feet. If the people said, "Tell us about it," they were to enter the house and tell them about Jesus, His great commission, His miracles, etc. When their Message was delivered, they were to let their peace abide with the family and hasten on their way.

Today conditions are different. To follow the method of the early disciples would not now accomplish the purpose. With us it is much better to take with us some tracts, or to sell to the people at a moderate price some literature, which will stir up their interest and fix it, which will give them the necessary information about the Kingdom soon to be established in a much fuller manner than in the days of our Lord's First Advent. At that time it was to be set up in the hearts of a few; now it is to be set up in power and great glory over all the earth. We are to go with a Message of peace, however, as did the early disciples--the Message of the Kingdom of Peace.

PROPER DEMEANOR OF GOD'S MESSENGERS

It is not the great Time of Trouble that constitutes our Message. We are to tell the glad tidings of the Gospel which shall be unto all people, and of the Times of Restitution soon to be ushered in. The Time of Trouble, if referred to at all, should be mentioned only as a necessary accompaniment of the change of dispensations because of the world's unpreparedness for the Kingdom and its blessings. As we go along in our work of proclamation, we

would very properly keep in mind that we are peacemakers, not breeders of strife and contention. Some of us might be taken for strife-breeders if we were not very careful how we present the Message. We are to seek so

R5980 : page 326

far as possible to promote peace, to tell the people about God's love, mercy and goodness. As we do this in love, we find and reach the very class which the Lord now designs to reach. He is not now seeking the froward. He is seeking a special class, the Bride class.

If we are wise, we shall take heed to the special features of the Message. It is a Message of peace and good will. It is to point men in the right direction--that is, those who are of the proper class. The Message is not now for the swinish, for the quarrelsome, for the selfish and wicked. It is for the humble, the teachable, the honest-hearted. If any refuse our Message, we are not to manifest antagonism or bitterness. We are not to say, "Some day you will wish you had heard me!" This is not our business. It was particularly said of our Master that when He was reviled He reviled not again. We are to follow His example in this.

Some might say, "But did not our Lord, when opposed by the Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, use very plain language to them? Did He not call them hypocrites, whited sepulchres and vipers?" This is true; but we are to remember that our Lord Jesus was in a position of authority which we do not occupy. He was perfect, too, "knew what was in man," and could make no mistake in respect to the heart-condition of each of His opponents. This is not true of us. Moreover, when Jesus used this language He addressed a class, and not an individual. When we have presented the Message of the Lord faithfully, we are to feel that we have done our duty; and we should leave the results with the Lord of the Harvest. The Truth itself is a sharp sword, and will do all the cutting necessary. Moreover, it should be the Truth itself that causes the opposition wherever it is found, and not any rudeness or unkindness of word or act on our part. All with whom we come in contact should be able to see by our sweetness of spirit, by our patience under provocation, that we have indeed "been with Jesus" and learned of Him.--Acts 4:13.

The "peace of God which passeth all understanding" should have such control of each one who would represent the Lord and His Message, that a hallowed influence would go with each, especially in every service rendered and every word spoken in the name of the Prince of Peace. The character of His true people is described by the Master Himself. They who would be properly termed the children of God should be peacemakers. He declared that these were blessed. The Apostle Paul also urges, "So far as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." (Romans 12:18.) It is not possible to live peaceably with all and

still be true to the principles of righteousness, but the interests of peace should be conserved in every proper way by the Lord's representatives.

Upon entering any house, our thought should be to do good, to carry blessing, to exercise an influence favorable to the peace, joy and uplift of those within--not by preaching at them, but by simply, unobtrusively presenting our Message. If, as the Lord's ministers, we should be rebuffed and disdained, not welcomed, we should be careful not to intrude ourselves further. In this figurative sense we would wipe off the very dust from our feet, hastening away to find those whose hearts are hungry for the Word of grace; for if the Truth is properly, lovingly presented, and meets with no response, the Father would not have us violate the proprieties of courtesy by imposing ourselves upon those who are unappreciative. Our Lord set us a good example in this matter.

BEGGING FOR THE LORD NOT AUTHORIZED

The disciples of Jesus who were sent forth to preach the Kingdom Message were not to go from house to house as beggars, to get a meal here and a lodging there; but were to expect that if the Lord had guided them providentially to those who received them, He meant to give their hosts a blessing proportionate to the cost of their brief entertainment. They were not to consider these hospitalities in the light of alms; for as the Lord's representatives they were there to confer blessings greater far than they would receive, and as common laborers even the service they rendered should be worth at least their keep. This principle was to apply not only to a house, but to a city. They were not to be fastidious, but to accept such hospitalities as were proffered them; and if this meant no hospitality, they were to leave the city and go to one where they would be received and their Message given a reasonable hearing. The Lord's servants are not in any sense to be beggars, nor to beg for the Lord.

Verse 9 of the chapter from which our text is taken might at first sight appear to be applicable to the Jewish Harvest only; but not so. There is spiritual as well as physical sickness, and the Lord's ambassadors of today should consider it to be their mission, their business, to open blind eyes, to unstop deaf ears, and to assist the spiritually sick by pouring the balm of Gilead upon bruised and broken hearts. It is proper now, as then, to declare to all people, "The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." This announcement has not been proper all through

R5980 : page 327

the Age, but has been appropriate merely in the ends, or Harvests, of the two Ages.

MESSAGE OF TRUTH MAKING A SEPARATION

We have now come to the end of the time which God set apart for the gathering of Spiritual Israel; and the proclamation is now due, Behold, the King is at the door! This Message has been going forth from the Wise Virgins for the last forty years, and has been separating the wise from the foolish. This work is now nearly finished. As in the days when our Lord walked from city to city in Israel, proclaiming the Call of the New Dispensation to joint-heirship in the Kingdom, He declared to the cities that rejected His Message, "It will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment than for you" (Matthew 10:15), so we may expect it to be now. Those who have been favored with the Message of Truth and have turned a deaf ear, while still professing to be followers of Christ, and perhaps teaching in His name, will find the conditions of the incoming Age less favorable to them than to heathen peoples who have never heard the true Message of God, the Gospel of the Kingdom, the establishment of which is now very near.

These heathen will probably fall in line with the Kingdom conditions and requirements more readily and with fewer stripes than will those whose hearts have been more or less hardened because of sinning against light and opportunity, and because of refusing to hear and properly weigh the evidences presented to them by the Lord's messengers. Some who in this life have enjoyed high position in the Jewish and in the Christian systems will be greatly humbled in the coming time, when in Christ's Kingdom, judgment will be laid to the line, "and righteousness to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies" (Isaiah 28:17), and when all evils and deceptions now practised shall be exposed and overthrown. Many then, we fear, will be the stripes that some of these will receive before they are brought into a humble, teachable, obedient condition of heart.

SOME TIMELY WORDS OF CAUTION

In the days or months yet remaining until the completion of our work here in the flesh, let us be worthy exponents of the precious Truth and worthy representatives of Him whose name we bear. There is danger that those who have not been long in the narrow way, and have as yet learned but partially the lessons of meekness, gentleness, patience and love, may not always leave a sweet, helpful influence in the homes which they enter. There is danger that there may be evil-speaking, backbiting, evil insinuations against others, ungentleness of word or conduct, impatience, etc. The influence of such, even though they may be pupils in the School of Christ, is carnal, highly injurious to spiritual development, injurious to the growth of the various fruits of the Spirit in themselves and in others who are seeking to walk in the right ways, directed by the Lord in His Word.

How important it is that all who have named the name of Christ, who have entered His School, should apply

themselves well to the lessons set for us by our great Teacher! How important it is that we who have made a covenant with the Lord, should walk worthy of our great vocation, and not be a reproach to Him whose Cause we have espoused! There are no people upon the face of the earth who should so exemplify in their daily walk and conversation the precious fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit of God as should those who have been led out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Lord. We believe that we are earnestly desirous of thus glorifying our Lord and of showing Him our gratitude and appreciation for His loving-kindness to us.

The Church is today "as a city set upon a hill, which cannot be hid." Much is expected of us, even by our opponents. Much is surely expected of us by our Lord. Then let us be faithful, dear brethren, in word, in act, in all our department. Thus shall we honor the name of our God and of our Savior and King, whom we hope soon to see face to face.

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R5981 : page 327

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

IS IT in vain that the Lord instructed His people that the closing time of this Gospel Age would be an "hour of temptation" coming upon the whole world? (Revelation 3:10.) Surely we have not been taught of the Lord in vain! and so, all loyal to Him are buckling on the breastplate, the helmet and the sandals, and are taking the sword and the shield. If we have not yet entered into fierce conflicts, we know that we are to expect them; and we should be prepared, and have such practise and experience as would enable us to acquit ourselves valiantly in "the hour of temptation."

Since we are instructed that this "hour of temptation" cometh upon the whole world, as well as upon the Church, we perceive that it must be something in the air, as it were, that would affect everybody. We believe that this temptation is a thing spreading itself gradually in every direction; and the Master assured us that unless these days would be cut short by the establishment of His Kingdom in the hands of the Elect, no flesh would survive.

We understand this to mean that the spirit of selfishness and ambition, which is already operating among the nations and driving them insanelly to war for commercial supremacy, is the spirit which will increase more and more, and will involve everybody, everywhere. This spirit is seen in the strikes, etc., of our own land--everybody anxious to serve self, and willing to fight for honors, privileges, positions, etc.

But we are more interested in the Church and in seeing

how this "hour of temptation" will involve the Lord's people. What we are about to write is far from what we would prefer, but it seems to be our duty as respects the Lord's Cause and people. We believe that a great crisis is upon the Bible students; and that the sooner it is discerned, the more successfully it may be passed. It may mean divisions; but as the Apostle remarked, divisions are sometimes necessary that the approved course and the approved doctrines and the approved methods may be discerned, and that the true teachers be the more fully appreciated. --1 Corinthians 11:18,19.

Before mentioning the sad feature, we mention one for general encouragement; namely, that, so far as we can discern, through intercourse with the friends at conventions, etc., there was never a time when the rank and file of Bible Students possessed such a spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, love, intelligence, faith, joy, as now.

"TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES"

It causes real grief to write that much of the difficulty and danger to the Church seems to lie at the door of the Elders and Deacons--not all, thank God, but apparently a small minority of them, judging from the queries which come to the Office from time to time from the bewildered sheep, who seek advice as to their proper course. The

R5981 : page 328

true, loyal servants in the Church should be all the more appreciated by the Lord's people in proportion as they realize the difference between true Elders and Deacons and those who are untrue. Nor are we writing with a view to the discouragement of the unfaithful, but rather to open their eyes to the true situation, that perchance they may be recovered out of the snare of the Adversary and become helpers of the Lord's Flock, instead of hinderers.

So far as we are able to judge, the same conditions prevail today amongst Bible Students which the Apostle pointed out to the Elders of the Church of Ephesus when he charged them: "Take, therefore, heed unto yourselves and all the Flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with the blood of His own [Son]." (Acts 20:28.) St. Paul's prophecy came true: "After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the Flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace."--Acts 20:29-32.

COURSE OF TWO OF GOD'S SERVANTS CONTRASTED

As it was ambition which first misled Lucifer, and converted

a glorious servant of God into an adversary, so it is his spirit that has been dangerous all the way down. The spirit of our Master was the very reverse of this. "He humbled Himself, even unto death," in the doing of the will of the Father. We see nothing of the spirit of pride or ambition or self-seeking of any sort in our Master. We are warned by the Apostle to humble ourselves after His example, if we desire to be exalted with Him in His Kingdom.

But how many seem to forget entirely these Scriptures, which we so frequently bring to the attention of the Lord's people as essential to our attaining to any position in the Kingdom! From reports given us, a horrible state of affairs prevails in some Classes when an election is to be held. The servants of the Church attempt to be rulers, dictators--sometimes even holding the chairmanship of the meeting with the apparent object of seeing that they and their special friends shall be elected as Elders and Deacons. We have heard of cases in which an Elder refused to speak to one of the Congregation because the latter had not voted for him. Yet doubtless that very Elder would think himself the personification of modesty, humility and meekness.

Oh, for shame that such a spirit should have any place amongst those who have any knowledge of the teachings of God's Word and of the conditions upon which we may hope for joint-heirship with the Master! Of course, there are various degrees of brazen-facedness in such matters. Some quietly try to take advantage of the Class by having the election at some time which is especially favorable to them and their friends. Others seek to pack the meeting with their friends, bringing in comparative strangers, who have no thought of being regular in attendance at the Class, but come merely as an act of friendship to vote for one of their friends.

Additionally, it may generally be expected that such as manifest an ambition of this kind to be leaders and teachers and to ignore the principles of the Golden Rule, as well as the special instructions for the New Creation, are generally the ones who bring in false doctrines. The same ambitious spirit of the Adversary which leads them to strive for honor in the Class seems to lead them on to pose as great teachers--bringers forth of new light. This also, the Apostle explains, is a characteristic of Satan. He says, "What wonder if he transforms himself into an angel of light"--makes himself to appear a leader amongst the children of light.--2 Corinthians 11:14.

In many cases, the Classes are solely to blame, according to their own statement. In some instances, persons have been elected to Eldership who had not even made a profession of consecration to the Lord or who had not symbolized their consecration. Why? Because the Class happened to be without any special talent, and the one who was not a Brother at all, not a New Creature in Christ, was chosen because he had some speaking talent. What could we expect from such a one being exalted to

the position of a teacher amongst Bible Students? We could expect only injury to the Cause and injury to the person thus pushed forward contrary to the directions of the Lord's Word. If the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit himself, how could he communicate things of the Spirit to the Lord's consecrated ones? How could we expect the Lord to guide such a one, who had not given over his life to be a footstep-follower of the Lord and to be instructed by His Word?

The selection of improper leaders is evidently a sin, and quite a reflection against the Classes who have the improper leaders. How could such get into positions to represent the Lord's people, except by the latter's votes? When will the Lord's people learn that ability to talk in public is only one of the qualifications of an Elder? Time and again we have noted how the Lord's Cause has been hindered, and spirituality amongst the brethren has been stifled, by attempts to imitate the nominal church in putting forward persons glib of tongue, lacking in spirituality.

In such a case, is it not pride on the part of the Class --a desire to make a fair show in the flesh before the world? If not, why do they elect such persons? If they have made a mistake, why do they not at once rectify it in a quiet and positive manner? When Elders seek to bring the Class under their power and control and succeed, does it not show that the Class lacks the very quality that the Lord tells us He desires to see--courage, overcoming? And does the Class not injure such a would-be ruler, as well as itself, by permitting him to succeed in his unscriptural methods?

"DECEIVING AND BEING DECEIVED"

We have already alluded to the ambitious and selfish spirit in the world leading on to anarchy; and we have just pointed out how the same selfish, ambitious spirit is leading on to anarchy in the Church. We foresee a Time of Trouble for the world upon this score, and a Time of Trouble also for the Church. The world cannot purge itself of this class; for the leaders and the led have the worldly spirit, which is sure to wax worse and worse. But not so in the Church of Christ. Ours is the spirit of the Master, the spirit of loyalty to Truth, the spirit of the Golden Rule, the spirit of brotherly love, the spirit of liberty and helpfulness, the spirit of fidelity to what we believe to be the Truth. It is inexcusable for the Church, possessed of this spirit, to continue under the domination of ambitious men (and sometimes ambitious women). If they have not been conducting their Class affairs along proper lines, should they not begin at once? We believe that this is the time in which to set the House of the Lord in order.

But some one will say, "We would have a great disturbance if we attempted to do anything contrary to the wishes of those who have fastened themselves upon us as our leaders and rulers. To make a move at all, would

endanger a division of the Class, and how could we think of anything which would result in that catastrophe?"

But, we inquire, which would be the better, to have a

R5982 : page 329

smaller Class operating along the lines which the Lord has indicated, or a larger Class upholding principles contrary to the Lord's provision, injuring themselves, hindering their influence, and encouraging as a leader one who is either a "wolf" or else a "sheep" which has been mistakenly misled into the wolf spirit? We encourage all the dear Brethren who are in such trouble to be very heroic; to see that they do nothing from strife or vain-glory, but everything in the spirit of meekness and love, that they may get back again to the liberty wherewith Christ made free, and be not again entangled in any human bondage.

REMEMBER DOCTRINAL TESTS ALSO

Repeatedly Bible Students write us that their Elders try to hinder them from the use of the WATCH TOWER SOCIETY'S publications as textbooks in Bible Study. Some of these Elders go so far as to tell the classes that they are out of harmony with many of the things in these textbooks. Sometimes, as rulers, they forbid the use of these in the classes. We are asked what should be done under such circumstances.

We reply, Let those who wish to follow such leaders do so--that is their right. We shall wish them well. But let us not follow with them nor submit for a moment to such arrangements. It is the height of impertinence for such a leader to intrude himself in such a manner, and attempt to tell the Church what they shall and what they shall not do. As the power of election is in the hands of the Church, so the power of dismissal is in their hands. We recommend that such Classes vote to dismiss such an Elder from his position of service, telling him kindly that his services are no longer desired. Perhaps with a back seat for a while, and an opportunity for thinking over the matter, he may be benefited himself, and the Class also be greatly helped forward by taking such a stand--no matter whether there be no other person in the Class able to address a public meeting or accustomed to leading Classes. Far better would it be to appoint any one of your number to act as chairman, or to take turns in the matter of opening and closing meetings--anything to preserve your liberty and to continue the work of worship and study along proper lines.

Let us make a discrimination between the positive teachings of the Bible--the doctrines of Christ--and the slightly variant ways of expressing those doctrines. We are not to expect any two persons to use exactly the same words; but there are certain doctrines which are fast and immovable from the viewpoint of the majority of Bible Students. Any one not in good harmony with those presentations

should not be encouraged in the slightest degree, but, on the contrary, should be discouraged. If he has different views, do not persecute him--do not follow the style of the Dark Ages, but follow the proper course of letting him "flock to himself," or with as many as prefer to view matters as he views them.

We have not given such strong advice heretofore; but we perceive that many of the dear sheep are being troubled, hindered of development and imposed upon. We see that proportionately such Elders and Deacons are growing more bold, and hence the need is the greater that all who do have the right spirit, and who realize that, under the Lord's guidance in our study of the Divine Plan of the Ages, we have not been following "cunningly devised fables," should now take a positive stand for the good of themselves, for the good of the leaders who manifest a wrong spirit, and for the good of the public, who are inquiring for the way of the Lord as never before.

While we are encouraging positiveness and courage, we are not wishing to encourage a spirit of strife, or of nagging and fault-finding amongst the faithful servants of the Lord who do manifest the humble spirit and who do accord the Class its rights and liberties and who seek to "serve well." Again we repeat, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but all to the glory of God," and with the sole object in view of purging the Church of the influence of those who never should have been chosen, or having been chosen in proper condition, have since manifested a perverted and ambitious spirit. Again we counsel for these positiveness, but kindness and, if they repent, mercy--with a view possibly to restoring them to confidence later on. The Apostle wrote, "I hear that there are divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." (1 Corinthians 11:18,19.) Here the division evidently must come; and evidently the sooner it comes, the better it will be for the Truth and for all who love it.

"BY MY SPIRIT, SAITH THE LORD"

We should never forget the Apostle's instruction, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14.) Additionally, experience demonstrates to us that even after we have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, our ability to understand spiritual things depends, not only upon our study of the Scriptures, which are able to make us wise, but also upon the measure of the Holy Spirit which we possess. Hence the Apostle's exhortation, "Be ye filled with the Spirit!" --Ephesians 5:18.

This means that only the spirit-begotten may understand the deep things of God at all; and that their understanding would be in proportion as they attain more and

more a filling, a saturation with the spirit of holiness, the spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of Truth. Every Bible Student should realize that if, as a New Creature, he walks after the flesh and not after the Spirit, his mind will become more or less darkened, and not only will his ability to understand the deep things of God decrease, but even his recollection of the Lord's Word will decrease; and that, on the contrary, when he is living near to the Lord--walking after the Spirit and not after the flesh--his memory of the Divine Word and his ability to appreciate its Spirit are increased.

Additionally, let us remember that a correct understanding of the Lord's Word is not enjoyed by all the educated and talented, but comes to those who are of a meek and teachable heart, who study the Lord's Word and who live it and absorb its spirit. Thus we have illustrated to us the Divine declaration, "Not by might [greatness], nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."--Zechariah 4:6.

The lesson to us is that no matter how great, no matter how able any brother or sister may be, this will not make such fit to be a leader of the Lord's people unless he have additionally the all-important items--first, a knowledge of the Lord's Word; and second, the possession of a good degree of the spirit of Truth--one who always dare be trusted as an ambassador of the Lord. None others should be recognized as teachers or leaders amongst the Lord's people. It is the thought of Churchianity that only the great, the learned, the talented, should be the ministers of the Lord's Word; but the Bible's presentation is to the contrary of this. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Good Tidings to the meek."--Isaiah 61:1.

R5982 : page 330

It is in view of these things that we feel justified in urging upon the Classes of Bible Students everywhere that they esteem with double honor such Elder brethren as manifest the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of meekness, the spirit of gentleness, the spirit of patience, the spirit of long-suffering, the spirit of brotherly-kindness, and the spirit of love--those who have a good knowledge of the Word of God and of the Divine Plan, and who manifest an appreciation of the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of holiness, and who have an aptness to teach; and that on the contrary, all others be refused.

THE V.D.M. QUESTIONS

Long ago we called attention to the fact that many of the titles applied by the nominal church to their ministers are wholly un-Scriptural--Reverend, Most Reverend, Doctor of Divinity, etc. They are not only opposed to the letter, but also to the spirit of the Scriptures. We called attention to the fact that the words Elder, Deacon and

Pastor are Scriptural terms. We also called attention to the Latin title, Verbi Dei Minister (V.D.M.), and stated that this expresses exactly the Bible thought that every representative of Christ who preaches in public is a Minister of the Divine Word--not a minister of human creeds or of self. All Bible Students approved of God and of His people are of necessity Ministers of the Divine Word --each according to his talents, opportunities and restrictions, as set forth in the Bible.

In view of the fact that quite a good many Classes of Bible Students seem to be not sufficiently particular in respect to the qualifications of those whom they choose as their representatives, we formulated a number of questions styled, V.D.M. Questions, believing that the study of these questions would be helpful to everybody, and that the answers of them would help to mark out such as have a reasonable knowledge of the Divine Word, and whose ministries, therefore, it might be hoped would be profitable and not injurious. These questions are not sectarian, but would be proper for any minister of any denomination. Neither are they catch questions, intended to trip up the unwary. They are simple bona fide queries, the answering of which should be helpful to each individual, and especially helpful in designating those fit to be teachers and leaders amongst the Lord's people.

These we prepared and sent to the Pilgrims--the traveling preachers sent forth under the auspices of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, and to all representatives of the Society in any capacity everywhere. Next came applications from Elders and Deacons in

R5983 : page 330

various quarters, and from others of the Bible Students. Then we advised that the questions be studied and answered, as formulated, by all Bible Students. We received many applications, and many of these have been filled out and returned. It is our recommendation to all the Classes that any brother not able to answer these questions in a reasonable way be not considered a suitable representative.

In order that all Bible Students may have these questions and note their simplicity, we publish them below.

Brothers Sturgeon, Burgess and Stephenson have been appointed a committee to examine the answers sent in by the Pilgrims. We have no doubt that every one of their answers will be found satisfactory as a whole. None will be rejected except for good cause, and this will be duly pointed out. By vote the New York City Class decided that none should serve it as Elders or Deacons who could not give a reasonably satisfactory reply to these questions. We suggest a somewhat similar course in all the Classes. The examiners of the answers could either be a committee from the Class or, if desired, the Society's representatives above mentioned, to examine the answers and give their criticisms upon request.

V.D.M. QUESTIONS FOR ADVANCED BIBLE STUDENTS

- (1) What was the first creative act of God?
- (2) What is the meaning of the word "Logos," as associated with the Son of God? and what is signified by the words Father and Son?
- (3) When and how did sin enter the world?
- (4) What is the Divine penalty for sin upon the sinners? and who are the sinners?
- (5) Why was it necessary for the "Logos" to be made flesh? and was He "incarnated"?
- (6) Of what nature was the Man Christ Jesus from infancy to death?
- (7) Of what nature is Jesus since the resurrection; and what is His official relation to Jehovah?
- (8) What is the work of Jesus during this Gospel Age-- during the time from Pentecost until now?
- (9) What has thus far been done for the world of mankind by Jehovah God? and what by Jesus?
- (10) What is the Divine purpose in respect to the Church when completed?
- (11) What is the Divine purpose in respect to the world of mankind?
- (12) What will be the fate of the finally incorrigible?
- (13) What will be the reward or blessings which will come to the world of mankind through obedience to Messiah's Kingdom?
- (14) By what steps may a sinner come into vital relationship with Christ and with the Heavenly Father?
- (15) After a Christian has been begotten of the Holy Spirit, what is his course, as directed in the Word of God?
- (16) Have you turned from sin to serve the living God?
- (17) Have you made a full consecration of your life and all your powers and talents to the Lord and His service?
- (18) Have you symbolized this consecration by water immersion?
- (19) Have you taken the I.B.S.A. Vow of holiness of life?
- (20) Have you read thoroughly and carefully the six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES?
- (21) Have you derived much enlightenment and benefit therefrom?
- (22) Do you believe you have a substantial and permanent knowledge of the Bible which will render you more efficient as a servant of the Lord throughout the remainder of your life?

Note: It is, of course, expected that each person filling out one of these reports will do so from his own knowledge and not by inquiring for or copying the answers of others. The BIBLE, STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and TABERNACLE SHADOWS may be consulted, however, and citations given.

SUPPOSED OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

One, and only one, objection was raised to the foregoing-- a fear that it is Babylonish, Sectarian. Ah! it is wonderful how the great Adversary strives always to make

out that the right is wrong, that the light is darkness. Babylon's method is to take all power and authority out of the hands of the people of God and put it into the hands of one person or a clique of preachers or bishops or elders. Our aim continually is to preserve the liberty of each ecclesia and have each recognize its own authority and responsibility.

Our reply to the objecting Brother may be of interest to all of our readers, and so we present it below:

DEAR BROTHER:--I am glad to see you scrupulously careful of all of the rights and liberties of the Church of God, and careful to oppose anything that would seem to savor of sectarianism.

I remind you that sectarianism is an attempt on the part of many companies or classes to control each other in matters of doctrine and practise. We are suggesting nothing of this kind, but feel as much opposed to it as you do. We are not attempting to establish any law or rule which must govern all the classes of the Lord's people, but merely suggesting to them the establishment of law and order in their own midst, by themselves.

For instance, each member of every class in voting for Elders and Deacons should certainly consider before voting the qualifications of those for whom he votes: (1) What

R5983 : page 331

are his religious professions as respects faith in the teachings of the Bible on the fundamental points; (2) Whether or not the one to be voted for is clear in his understanding of the Truth so as to be apt at teaching it to others; (3) Whether or not the individual has made a consecration of himself to the Lord and has symbolized it; (4) Whether or not the individual manifests a high standard of morals in his deportment, and whether or not he is in sympathy with high ideals such as are represented in the Vow.

Heretofore, the classes have been obliged to surmise on these subjects, and our proposal now is that they do not surmise, but ask the brethren our list of V.D.M. Questions or any other set of questions which the class may prefer, and have their answers to these questions before deciding that they are suitable representatives of the class as its honored servants. This maintains the authority of the class, the Ecclesia, as no sectarian system does, and makes the class the judges of the qualifications of its representatives as the Bible directs should be shown by the stretching forth of the hand and the ordaining or authorizing of the individual to serve as a representative of the class.

Your letter intimates a query as to the propriety of appointing three brethren to examine the answers to the V.D.M. Questions.

I reply that each class certainly has the right to recognize or appoint certain brethren in whose judgment they would have confidence to examine the answers given to the questions, and to report if any of them were answered unsatisfactorily in their judgment--so that the class could have the final decision.

This seems to be an easier way than to have each member of the class read over the answers to the questions before voting. However, the matter is one for the class to decide. In the case of the New York City congregation, the vote was unanimous that all would have confidence in the broad-minded decision of the three brethren approved as a committee of examiners.

In respect to the Vow: Your letter seems to intimate that you have some opposition to it, and think an acknowledgment of its principles should not be required. Instead of saying what there is in the Vow that you object to, you hide behind the proposition that the expressions of the Vow are not found in that particular form in the Scriptures. I remind you that nothing in the English language is found in the Scriptures, because they were written in another language; and furthermore, that our hymns are not found in the Scriptures, and that what we believe to be clear statements of our faith are not found in the Scriptures in the very terms in which we would express them today. The Scriptures lay down for us the general principles of righteous living, and the true foundations of the faith once delivered unto the saints. We are to see to it that all that we sing and preach and pray and write and do is in line with these fundamental principles which the Bible sets forth. The great mass of THE WATCH TOWER readers have informed us that they believe that the phraseology of the Vow is in full harmony with the essence and spirit of the Word of God. If it is, and any brother finds himself in opposition to it, is he not finding himself in opposition to the spirit of God's Word? and if so, would he be a suitable representative of any class of Bible Students, as its Elder or Deacon? We think not. If any fault can be found with the Vow--if it can be shown to be in any sense or degree antagonistic to or out of harmony with the letter and essence of the Word of God we want to know it in no uncertain terms--all Bible Students would want to know this. But no one has yet shown any antagonism nor any deflections in the letter and spirit of the Vow from the letter and spirit of the Bible. We therefore advise all classes that anybody unwilling to assent to the Vow, unwilling to make it his own, has something the matter with him--either his head or his heart, in our judgment, must be out of harmony with the letter and spirit of God's Word and he would not be a suitable Elder or Deacon.

I trust, dear Brother, that as you read this over and ponder

R5984 : page 331

it and pray about it, you will realize that you have erred in your first judgment; or if you think of any points that I have not covered and thoroughly answered, it will afford me pleasure to have you state those points.

I here remind you that this Vow is unto the Lord, and not unto the brethren! We hold therefore that any one who declares that he has taken the Vow, has not brought himself thereby under bondage to any of the brethren; but merely declared to the brethren the obligation he has recognized and

declared to the Lord--hence it would not be the province of the brethren to investigate the affairs of the brother who declares he has taken the Vow, any more after his declaration than before it. The keeping of that Vow is between the individual and the Lord. It neither adds to nor diminishes his responsibility to the brethren and the class. His declaration that he has taken the Vow merely informs the brethren of the high standard of moral living which he recognizes and is seeking to follow.

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R5984 : page 331

WORLD-WIDE PASTORAL WORK

ABOUT five hundred Classes of Associated Bible Students have voluntarily elected the Editor as their Pastor, and have notified the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY of the fact--requesting that in addition to his expositions and pastorals through THE WATCH TOWER columns, he would remember them in prayer and also from time to time send them such advice as he might believe would be for their profit and the Lord's glory through representatives and by mail.

We have rejoiced to note activity in the Lord's service amongst the Brethren, and have done our best to open up ways and means by which they could render service to the great King and assistance to His followers. But only of late has the Lord deeply impressed upon our attention a considerable work in which the Sisters might engage with profit both to themselves and to the Cause.

Before suggesting the matter to outside Classes, we made a trial of it in New York City. The resulting success was so pronounced that we felt justified in calling it to the attention of all the Classes which have notified us of our election as their Pastor, sending to each Class copies of the following letters--one to the regular Class Secretary for the benefit of the Elders and the Class in general, and the other for the special use of the Sister chosen to be the Pastor's lieutenant in this work. The publication of the letters here will make the whole matter the better known to each member of such Classes, some of whom may not have heard the reading or may have forgotten the contents:

PASTORAL WORK IN WHICH SISTERS COOPERATE

Some months ago we called the attention of THE WATCH TOWER readers to an important Follow-up Work possible in connection with addresses received at Public Meetings, DRAMA Exhibitions, from Colporteur Lists, etc.--persons who supposedly have some interest in religious matters and who presumably would be more or less amenable to the Truth. We

have since been attempting to classify and arrange these addresses, but there are so many of them and our time is so limited that we have gotten comparatively few into the shape originally intended. Rather than delay the important work further, we purpose sending lists of addresses to those who will be colaborers in this Pastoral Work, at once, that they may be copied and classified by the workers of each district.

While this branch of the work is intended for the Sisters only, because we find that usually they are more successful and additionally have more time to invest in the work, nevertheless we are not proposing anything which would ignore the Classes of the I.B.S.A. Indeed, so far as we are able to designate, we are suggesting this work only to Classes which have informed us that they have chosen me as their Pastor.

The plan is to bring together the Sisters of each class who have time at their disposal and the desire to engage as Pastoral Workers under this plan. In such a group, of course, there would be some with more and some with less talent for the service, and some who could do one part of the work, but who would be totally unfit for another part. Hence it is desirable that the Sisters choose from their number a Lieutenant having considerable time at her disposal and considerable executive ability, and that breadth of mind which would enable her to appreciate and use the position properly, dividing the work wisely amongst the others and herself. Before the Lieutenant would be elected, prayer should be made for

R5984 : page 332

wisdom and guidance in the matter. I have already asked the Lord for special blessing upon such arrangements and will continue so to do. Any Sister not qualified for the service ought to rejoice that she has the privilege of setting herself aside for the good of the cause, and might take pleasure in helping another Sister who possesses the necessary tact and other qualifications for the work. The Lord will look at our hearts and reward us according to our faithfulness to Him and to the Truth, and not merely according to the amount of our work.

The activities of this Committee, elsewhere detailed, will in a general way consist of visiting the addresses mentioned, ascertaining interest, removing prejudice, loaning STUDIES, etc.; and the culmination of the project is to interest as many as possible to the extent of gathering them into classes-- first to hear Chart Talks, and later to become regular Berean Classes. When the matter is worked up sufficiently, the Lieutenant will call upon the Elders of the I.B.S.A. Class to appoint thoroughly competent Brethren to give the Chart Talks. Meantime the Elder Brethren should be qualifying along this line. Shortly we will have a new edition of "Outlines of Chart Discourses," which will be helpful to them and which we will supply free. We will also be prepared shortly with a good supply of Cloth Charts for such service.

After the Chart Talks have been given and the Study Classes arranged for, the Elders of the Class will be expected to see to it that the Classes are supplied regularly

with efficient teachers. Remember the Apostle's instructions as to the qualifications of a teacher--"apt to teach." Do not spoil the Lord's work by any favoritism or by seeking either to give or to receive honor according to the flesh. Let our motto in everything be "God First," and self and every way of the flesh subordinate.

The plan is already in operation in several of the large cities with astonishing success. We think it strange we did not sooner realize the importance of this work and get it into operation. But perhaps it is a part of the work of the present hour--perhaps in some way it is connected with the smiting of the waters with the mantle of Elijah. We would not suggest that it would fulfil that type, but merely that it may be one of the features connected with it.

With this introduction to the work we leave the matter in the hands of the Lord's people, praying Divine blessing upon all who are disposed voluntarily to cooperate.

With this we are furnishing some suggestive hints as to method of procedure. With Christian love,

Your brother and servant in the Lord, C.T. RUSSELL.

HINTS TO PASTORAL WORKERS IN LARGE CITIES

The Pastoral letter, sent sometimes through a special representative and sometimes through the Class Secretary, being read to the I.B.S.A. Class, constitutes a call for a meeting of all the Sisters of the Class who have the time and strength to invest in the work described. Their first meeting should be for the purpose of choosing from their number one whom they believe to be the Lord's choice, to serve as Lieutenant, and another to be the Pastoral-Work Secretary and Treasurer.

(We regret that through some misunderstanding our representative appointed Lieutenants at some of the Conventions; and that when our Pastoral Letter arrived directing the election of the Lieutenant and Secretary a little confusion ensued. The Society's representatives are properly appointed, but in all matters connected with the Classes their choice or their sanction of our choice is the rule. So in this case: while we doubt not that very suitable Sisters were appointed, we request that the Sisters of each Class vote on the question and advise us of the results.)

The Class will doubtless consider it a privilege to supply the moderate expenses that will be incidental to this branch of the service, but should it not be so disposed, and should the matter be neglected, refer the same to the below address before it has run longer than a month, in the regular monthly report, calling attention to it very particularly.

All reports should be signed by the Lieutenant and the Secretary-Treasurer. Of course, we should be notified immediately after you have had this first meeting--the number present and your selection for Lieutenant and Secretary-Treasurer.

Your first meeting will help to make you acquainted with each other and to enkindle your enthusiasm respecting this part of the work, and enable the Pastor's representative (if present) to form an estimate of the material she will have to use and how it can best be used. Wherever possible we

are sending Sister Genevieve Sanford to assist in the organization and classification and explanation of what we have found to be the successful methods of work. If she be with you the explanations here will be the less important, except as you shall wish to have them for reference when she has gone. But if for any reason Sister Sanford cannot be with you, remember that all the more you will need to depend

R5985 : page 332

upon the Lord and to exercise your own best wisdom, justice and love in all arrangements. "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory."

AT THE SECOND MEETING

This meeting should not be long deferred--"Weld while the iron is hot." Our representatives are first to remember that system is necessary to the best results in anything. Before the second meeting the Lieutenant should procure four city maps as clear and distinct as possible, and four directories of city streets; a red pencil and a blue pencil and a couple of pads of stiff writing paper. The Lieutenant should prepare the first map herself--afterwards give it as a sample to helpers that they may prepare the other three maps.

Using one of your colored pencils, divide your city into sections of approximately ten blocks one way and fifteen the other; or 12 x 12, or 5 x 25, as may be most suitable to the shape of your city. After thus dividing the map, number the different districts with the other colored pencil.

Some of the names furnished you by the Society will be on cards, addresses on which some of the Sisters can be set to locating on the maps. When they find the district to which they belong, that number, in colored pencil, should be marked on the card plainly. Others of the names sent to you will be in lists, and each of these will need to be written off on a small pad-paper and in turn each address will need to have its colored figure representing the district to which it belongs.

Cheap file cards may be made by cutting stiff letter paper into convenient sizes, approximately like small post-cards. Do not immediately transfer the names from the DRAMA card or other memorandum or address to the file cards. Merely locate the addresses and district them. When interest is confirmed the address can be transferred to the file card.

Secure address of every Sister in the congregation, and let these be the start of the file cards, a red cross in the corner indicating that she is in the Truth. Her district should be indicated also on the map, and a small "x" should indicate approximately the location of her home.

The Lieutenant should select District workers according to supposed efficiency and without partiality. Give each worker preferably the district in which she lives, as her field of activity, or a district near, or otherwise the nearest district possible.

If you have an abundance of helpers, one in each district might attend to the Book-loaning, and another to making

calls on the addresses, but if the workers are not sufficient in number let the calling be done first and the book-loaning be a subsequent work, except as the person called upon might not have the books, but be willing to accept a volume on loan.

The Sisters should report to the Lieutenant within a week. You may find that some of them have been hindered by sickness, or others have not found the time they had expected, or others may have broken down and proved inefficient, while still others may need further explanations and assistance. Write a kindly letter to any sister who fails to report in a week, encouraging her, expressing appreciation for what she already has done and hopes respecting her future progress, and assuring her that you will be pleased to have a call from her in respect to anything she does not fully understand. Keep each branch of the service up to its full capacity.

As the Sisters complete their visits in their districts the cards or other addresses showing no interest at all should be destroyed by the Lieutenant. Then three copies of addresses of all showing any interest should be made on the file cards, one copy for your file, one to be sent to the Brooklyn office, and the other copy to be retained by the District worker for further use. Impress upon the Sisters the need of care in handling cards, lest any addresses should be lost. This copying should be done as promptly as possible.

Some of the districts should be ready for Chart Talks within two weeks after the opening. With much Christian love,
Your brother and servant in the Lord, C.T. RUSSELL.

N.B.--We will supply you monthly report blanks, which please send to Brooklyn at the close of each month, addressing
"PASTORAL WORK DEPARTMENT,
c/o Mrs. Genevieve Sanford,
122 Columbia Hts., Brooklyn, N.Y.

HINTS TO DISTRICT WORKERS RE PASTORAL WORK

Arrange your address cards and memoranda alphabetically. Copy them in this order--alphabetically--into a book, leaving room for four or five names under each letter. Then

R5985 : page 333

you can rearrange your cards according to convenience in calling. If any of the cards are not sufficiently neat in appearance, they should be copied, rather than use anything unsatisfactory.

Wherever possible, these cards or memoranda should have a notation of what the individual called upon has already had in the way of Truth literature, as a guide to you in respect to what you shall say when you call. Arrange the cards so as to economize your time in making the visits. After each call write a brief history of that call on the card; for instance, "Interested, will attend Chart Talks"; or, "Not Interested"; or, "Moved," etc. This information on each card you should give to the Lieutenant every two weeks, that she may transfer the information to her file, destroying those showing "Moved" or "No interest."

While the meetings to be held will be supervised by the

Elders of the I.B.S.A. Class, we wish still to keep well in touch. Hence please report weekly by post-card to the Lieutenant the numbers in attendance at the meetings, and anything else that would seem to be helpful, as also the names of any who purchase the books. Remember, however, that while it is desirable that the people should buy the books--because they will then give the more earnest heed to the reading of them--yet nothing that would give any suggestion of merchandising the Truth is to be sanctioned. Rather than give the impression of trying to sell books, we would offer to loan them; but if the person prefers to purchase, of course we would be glad to have it so.

DISTRICT WORKERS' CANVASS

"Good morning! Is this where Mrs. Wood lives?"

"Yes."

"I am making some calls respecting a Circulating Library for Home Bible Study. I think you indicated an interest in this work some time ago. I would like to talk the matter over with you, if agreeable."

After being invited in, continue:

"At that time, Mrs. Wood, I believe you purchased a set of books called STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. May I inquire whether or not you found in them something that interested you?"

This is merely a supposed start to the conversation, which of course should vary according to the circumstances of the case, which you have noted on the card. What you shall say further must depend on circumstances as you find them. Possibly you will get a suggestion or a statement that the party found nothing to interest her, but that she knows of some people who are much interested. You thus have the opportunity of learning the address of others; and perhaps, by a little wise conversation, you may awaken interest in the one whom you are interviewing. Or the trouble may be prejudice, slander or misrepresentation. Such opportunities for correcting false impressions are valuable. Each worker should pray earnestly and continuously for wisdom from Above to say the right thing, and for grace from the Lord--meekness, patience, love in the heart--that her words might be like perfume and an anointing oil to all who are in sympathy with righteousness.

If the lady has not the books, offer to loan her a volume, and tell her of the proposal soon to have some Chart Talks on "The Divine Plan," given in that district. Explain to her how the CHART OF THE AGES helps to open the Bible to our understanding and to make it a new book. Assure her that the volume you offer to loan her will awaken her interest keenly, because it is different from other religious books and gives the chapter and verse, showing that it is really the Message of God's Word, even though different from what some of us had supposed. Inquire whether she would like to be notified respecting the Chart Talks when arranged for. Elsewhere we give some remarks especially on book-lending, which see. On leaving,

express the hope that your next call will find that she has read considerably and is deeply interested.

Write a brief history of this interview on your address memoranda, before going on to your next call. While covering your district note especially those who indicate sufficient interest to attend a Chart Talk. Be on the lookout also for the Lord's guidance for a place in which to hold the meeting --someone who has expressed interest and whose large parlor or sitting room would seem to be a favorable place. In such a case you might remark, "I was just thinking how convenient this room would be for such meetings, if you would like to have them here. I could not say definitely whether this would be considered the most suitable place or not, but would be glad, if you thought well, to make a memorandum that you would like to have the meetings here."

Confer with the Lieutenant respecting what you have found and the most suitable time for holding the meeting and the most suitable place--the Lieutenant, in turn, keeping in touch with the Elders of the Ecclesia before deciding definitely on the subject.

R5986 : page 333

As soon as the decision respecting the Chart Talks has been reached, call again upon those who seem favorable. Tell them about the arrangement and ask whether you may expect to see them there. Additionally, write a post-card to each of them so that it will reach them the day before the meeting. It might read something like this: "Just to remind you that we are to meet tomorrow, Thursday evening, to hear a talk on the CHART OF THE AGES at the home of Mrs. Wood, 122 West Charles St., at 7:30. I note that your home is about nine blocks from Mrs. Wood's home and suggest that the Fulton Street car, running east, will take you within one block. Get off at E Street. Yours, etc."--Signed.

You should be sure to be in attendance at every Chart Talk in your district, and should call on the interested to keep the interest alive, though the call need not be a lengthy one. Send also a post-card reminder each week.

At the close of the series of Chart Talks, a Question Meeting on the Chart will be in order, and should be announced by the lecturer himself. It is to be hoped that the Elders will select only wise and capable Brethren for this important service. If a considerable number of those present so desire, it might be intimated at this meeting that a First Volume Berean Study could be started.

Meantime, ascertain some other friendly one who would like to have the Berean Study in her home, provided the one who has volunteered the apartments for the Chart Talks should not seem anxious to have the Berean Study follow in her home. Other things being equal, the Berean study should preferably be held in the home of one of the Bible students. Let the vote for Berean Study of First Volume be taken on the night of the Question Meeting, the fourth night of the Chart Talks--the fourth week.

After the Berean Class has gotten properly started, you

may consider it as weaned and, if other important work presents itself, may feel free. Keep in touch with the Class; and should any of its members fail to attend for two weeks, be sure that you call upon them before the third meeting.

These Classes should be notified respecting all public lectures, and should be made acquainted with the meetings of the I.B.S.A. Class as soon as their interest begins to develop. It is preferable that not many of the regular Bible Students attend these Chart Talks and Berean Studies at first, lest the newcomers should be embarrassed and lest the parlors be too crowded; and that the newcomers may the more freely ask questions and be in less danger of being stumbled--all of the lecturing and leading being done by the one experienced Brother chosen by the Elders.

We advise that no singing be done at the Chart Talks, nor at first at the Berean Study Lessons. Every meeting, however, might be properly opened with a brief prayer. The meetings should begin promptly and not continue longer than one hour. Please call this to the attention of the leader.

Never sell anything at Chart Talk meetings, considering that those in attendance are your invited guests. If they do not have the books, their homes will be the proper place at which to suggest the purchase.

The Society will furnish, through the Lieutenant, question books for all such Classes, free.

Each district worker should have with her when making her first calls in the district a copy of Vol. I., SCRIPTURE STUDIES, so that she could refer to it, saying, "This is the Study which I hope will stimulate your interest in Biblical themes." Then will be an opportunity for you to give a talk on the book, offering to loan it if the listener is interested.

Report in person or by letter at least every two weeks to the Pastor's Lieutenant, and every week during the time that the lectures are in progress.

Should you need assistance do not yourself attempt to select an associate, but refer this matter to the Pastor's Lieutenant, who has the full responsibility.

Call upon the Bible Student Sisters residing in your district. They may be able to give you some information. Do not permit such calls to be of the ordinary kind, with minds diverted to chit-chat or gossip, but hold yourself strictly to your work and be an example. If the circumstances are favorable it would not be inappropriate to have prayer with such a Sister. If such a Sister is not engaged in any service, but has time for it, make a mental note of what you think she would be best suited for, and draw the matter to the attention of the Lieutenant, with full particulars as to the time at

R5986 : page 334

her disposal, health, activity, age, color, married or single, etc.; also in respect to her spiritual condition, and whether or not she is well posted in the Truth and apt at giving it out. Note whether the Sister is inactive or discouraged or new in the Truth. Let this information come to you as naturally as possible, without boring or close questioning.

Note also if she is of a gentle spirit or the contrary.

This information may be valuable to the Lieutenant when at some future time selecting suitable persons to make calls, to read to shut-ins, to fold tracts or to distribute volunteer matter for Chart Talks, Drama, Public Lectures, etc.

Always remember your privilege in connection with the stimulating of the Sisters in the Truth, as well as all with whom you come in contact, with respect to the glorious things of the Divine Plan and our wonderful opportunities and privileges.

The book-loaning is a separate work entirely from what we have outlined above; yet where the helpers are numerous and the cards of the interested ones few, the district worker may obtain the consent of the Lieutenant to add the Book-loaning feature, which we elsewhere describe.

We suggest the importance of full consecration of heart and life to the Lord before undertaking such work--before it will be acceptable or pleasing to the Lord. Then the consecration should be kept up to date. Every morning Divine blessing and guidance should be sought; and every evening a report of our endeavors, failures and desires should be made to our glorious Head, that we may find grace to help in every time of need. Everybody called upon should be impressed with our manifestation of the Holy Spirit of Love, and with the fact that it alone has actuated our visit. We should sympathize with all who have good desires in any sense of the word; with those who are deep in churchianity, for we are glad to find them interested in higher things; with others who have turned away from churchianity, for we know how hard it is to retain faith under present church conditions; and with others who have been prejudiced, for we are not surprised, and much prefer prejudice to lukewarmness.

Very truly your Servant, C.T. RUSSELL.

PASTORAL WORK EXTENDED LATER

It may seem early in this work to suggest an extension of effort outside of the large cities to smaller cities and villages. However, we think it best to lay before you the entire scheme, that we may be working together to the one end--the finding of God's jewels everywhere.

Our suggestion is that the Pastor's Lieutenant and the Elders in each large I.B.S.A. Class be ready to cooperate, as God's providence may indicate, with smaller classes within a radius of--say forty miles. After getting the work of your own city well under control and everybody busy--Chart Talks going, Bible Studies going--then look afield to help others.

Some of the smaller classes may be able to adapt our suggestions to their own immediate conditions, and some may not. Such as are not able to do so we recommend should appeal to us or to the larger Classes when they want advice or assistance. Then will be your opportunity. But let us never forget the Lord's arrangement--that each Class has charge of its own affairs, and only as it might request or desire should any other Class intrude or assist. Extension work may therefore best be done in towns where there

are no classes--the EUREKA DRAMA possibly being used to open the door.

LIEUTENANT AND SMALL CLASSES CONTIGUOUS

Correspondence requesting aid in the starting of such a work should be sent to the PASTORAL WORK COMMITTEE, c/o Mrs. Genevieve Sanford, 122 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. Sister Sanford, or in her absence some one authorized, will communicate with a large center of the work near to the inquirer and endeavor to provide the necessary assistance, instructions, etc., for a start. But the work should be carried on practically the same as in the larger centers, with such adaptations as may be necessary.

DISTRICT BOOK LOANING

An important feature of the Pastoral work now being widely undertaken is the loaning of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. We recommend that only Vol. I. generally be distributed; but of course we should be glad to loan other volumes subsequently, if desired. Our hope would be that an interest would develop which would eventually lead interested ones to desire to own the entire set of SCRIPTURE STUDIES; and since they are sold for so small a price--considerably less than cost of manufacture--none could think of our having any mercenary object in connection with their sale. Either the regular edition or the karatol may be used, but in some respects we favor the latter; for it looks smaller and therefore invites the attention of the busy. Nevertheless some may prefer the other edition because more easily read by the elderly.

A chief, or librarian, of either sex, may be chosen by the Class. On account of the weight of the books, a brother having a central office or store is sometimes preferable for librarian. The book supply should be kept at some place of easy access to all the workers.

R5987 : page 334

The Class should purchase as many volumes as it desires to use. These will be supplied at the rate charged Colporteurs --25c per volume, for each of the first three, and 30c for each of the second three volumes (in lots of 50), plus freight charges. Each volume should be numbered, and the numbers may as well begin with 500. If the number be plainly marked upon the paper cover, it will facilitate the keeping track of the books given out to each worker, and loaned by the worker to the interested.

In order that those visited may not think that they are being offered charity in the loaning of a book, we style this work the starting of a Circulating Library for Home Bible Study, otherwise they might be offended, and say, "We are able to buy all the books we need," or, "We can get at the Public Library whatever books we desire."

The volume should be loaned for two weeks and a call

made to collect at the end of that time; but of course if there is any interest manifested and for some reason it has not been read in the interim, it might be loaned afresh. Make a memorandum of the date when the book was loaned, and make a monthly report to the Book-loaning Department of the Class, as well as to the Pastor's Lieutenant.

CANVASS OF THE BOOK LOANER

"I am making some calls in the interest of A CIRCULATING LIBRARY FOR HOME BIBLE STUDY. I wish to talk the matter over with you and enlist your cooperation. This movement is an organized effort to provide everyone who loves the Bible with the means to understand its mysteries--making God's great Book plainly understood.

"I have brought with me a little volume containing sixteen Studies that cover THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES. If you are interested in the Bible, I should be glad to loan it to you."

Upon the acceptance of your proposition say:

"Now, by taking one Study a day you will finish the Volume in two weeks, with an extra Study on Sunday. By that time you will be so well informed on God's Plan that its various divisions will be well defined in your mind. Would you be willing to take one Study a day if you could be sure that in two weeks you would understand God's purposes toward you and yours and the whole world?"

"Yes!"

"Well, that is just what I propose to guarantee you! But remember, my guarantee is based upon your promise of a Study a day, which will require only about one-half hour each day."

Nothing in this book-loaning work interferes at all with the work of regular Colporteurs, and the loaner is fully authorized to take an order for books at any time, but is cautioned to remember that this is not her special work.

SOME QUERIES ANSWERED

We take this opportunity of answering publicly some queries that we have received about this work.

(1) Should Brethren also engage in this work?

We have not invited the Brethren to engage in this work because we believe that there are other things which they can do that Sisters cannot do. Besides, while there are tactless Sisters who might do more harm than good in this Pastoral Work, we believe that on the whole the Sisters are apt to display as much tact as the brothers or more; although there are some Brethren, of course, who are very resourceful, very wise. We are merely speaking in general terms and believe that the Sisters, on the whole, can render this service better than can the Brethren, and it gives them something special to do in the service of the King.

(2) Is it right, Scriptural, for the Pastor to select a Sister to be his Lieutenant in such a work?

We believe it to be in full harmony with the Lord's

teachings that the Sisters might so be used. All who receive the Holy Spirit, as previously pointed out, are anointed to preach the Gospel. The Lord, through St.

R5987 : page 335

Paul, has seen fit to limit the conditions under which a Sister may preach--that her preaching may not be of a public character, and that she may not be considered a teacher in the Church. Nothing in this, however, interferes with her doing private Pastoral Work of the kind here suggested.

(3) After the Sisters shall have formed Classes for Bible study, what would be the necessary procedure if there were no consecrated Brother in the Class, or none qualified to give a Chart Talk or other address?

In such event, inquiry might be made of some nearby Class whether or not one of its Elders might be spared to render this assistance. If there be no nearby Class, or if none could be spared to render the assistance, the Pastor hereby authorizes the Sisters to choose one of their number as his representative to give the Chart Talk and, subsequently, to start a Berean Bible Study. She should perform her duties with head covered, explaining the significance of this to the audience, and declaring that she is merely serving because of the necessity of the case, until some consecrated brother shall have developed the necessary knowledge and qualifications to become the leader. Furthermore, she should remind all present that the Apostle's instruction is that the Sisters are not to teach in the Church, and that a class of inquirers is not understood to be an organized class of Bible Students or an Ecclesia or Body of Christ, but merely novices who, it is hoped, will develop speedily to maturity.

(4) Ought some of the younger Brethren be drilled into this work by having them occasionally address the regular Class?

Assuredly novices should not be introduced into this work. Good intentions count with the Lord as respects the heart; but more than good intentions are needed for His service, according to the instructions of the Word. Only those that have a talent for public speaking, and additionally have a clear knowledge of the Truth and an aptitude for teaching--only such should be assigned to the important work of interesting people who have only recently come to a knowledge of the Truth and to a limited degree, and whose minds are more or less prejudiced with erroneous ideas. The very best talent that the Class possesses will be none too good for this service.

Let us say, additionally, that to invite novices to address the Class on Sundays or at other times in a public lecture would be entirely wrong. The Lord's people should not be bored any more than the public. Such Brethren as show some talent should be encouraged to study and to practise, but not to practise upon others than themselves. We have already recommended, and do

so again, that the less experienced of the Brethren who feel that they have talents for the Lord's service might well be encouraged to have meetings by themselves, with perhaps some Elder Brother present as a moderator to hear them and to offer kindly criticisms--of manner, voice, tone, doctrinal intelligence, logic, etc. The members of the Class should be permitted to criticize each other, but not too severely, lest the humbler ones should be discouraged from making further effort.

We recommend Chart Talks as one of the best instructions for these novices and one of the most efficient ways of learning how to present the Divine Plan. They should be encouraged to follow quite closely the outlines of Chart Discourses. Following these three outlines, on the fourth night the audience should be invited to ask questions along every phase of the Divine Plan illustrated in the Chart, and a competent instructor should be able to answer every such question. To fulfil these requirements requires more than a novice; and even the mature of the Lord's people will do well to keep their minds continually refreshed by constant study.

Although we have sent a letter on Extension Work, our thought is that nothing whatever should be attempted beyond the boundaries of the city in which the Class is located until that city shall have been thoroughly worked. We would have preferred not to send that letter at the same time; but we considered it advisable that all the dear friends should have the matter well before their minds, and thus learn the wide possibility which may come to them, if faithful, in due time.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES OF SERVICE

Many of the dear friends have been astonished to find what opportunities this work opens up. We find that many who have gotten a little taste of the Truth are very willing to attend a meeting, an entertaining Chart Talk on the Divine Plan set forth in the Bible--some who are not interested enough to undertake special reading. As they become interested in a Chart Talk, they generally become interested in the reading; and all of the talks should be had with a view to impressing upon them the importance of Bible Study, and the need that they have for the Bible Keys, if they will get any profit out of the study. They know, and we all know, that the Bible has been in the hands of the people freely for over one hundred years, and that much Bible reading, verse about and by the chapter and by so-called Bible study, has been going on in all denominations with little result.

Few, except Bible Students, can really answer any Bible questions. Having learned how to study the Bible, let us continue in the same way and extend the same helping hands to others. Nevertheless, if there are some who have not yet convinced themselves of the folly of the old method of Bible study, it is not for us to hinder them, but to bid them God-speed, and ourselves to continue

in the way in which the Lord has blessed us and is continuing to bless us.

SMITING OF JORDAN NOT FAR OFF

Our thought, dear Brethren and Sisters, is that a great work is before us, and that in proportion as we get ready for it, the Lord will be pleased to bless us with a

R5988 : page 335

share. Some may have a share in the calling at the addresses already gathered. Others may have a share in giving the chart talks, and others may have a share in leading Berean lessons. Let us not forget, dear Brethren, that we must have humility. The Lord has no use for the proud and self-sufficient, either in the present Age in the instructing and building up of the Church, or in the future Age in the instruction and uplifting of the world. The Scriptures assure us in no uncertain terms that the Lord abhors the proud and shows His favor to the humble. The Apostle says, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time" (1 Peter 5:6); for "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."--Luke 14:11.

Let us not forget the importance of knowledge. No one is capable of teaching others who has not a clear knowledge himself.

Finally, let us remember that knowledge without the humility might puff up. We shall be built up under the influence of self-sacrificing love. Let us all, dear friends, get more ready--nearer to the Lord and more ready for His service. The smiting of the Jordan assuredly is not far off; and do we wish to have a share in it? As Elijah did the smiting, so all those who belong to the Elijah Class will have a share in it.

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page 337

VOL. XXXVII. NOVEMBER 15 No. 22
A. D. 1916--A.M. 6045

CONTENTS

Death of Charles T. Russell	338
"The Earth Trembled"--And Fell	339
Lightning Flashes From the Throne	339
One of the Master's Forceful and Beautiful Lessons	341
Proper Consideration of the Lily	341
Rest and Peace in Perfect Trust	342
"How Long, Oh Lord, How Long?" (Poem)	342

"Jesus Christ--the First and the Last" . 343
 What the Beloved Disciple Saw . . 344
 The Master's Comforting Message . . 344
 "In His Right Hand Seven Stars" . . 345
 "Faithful Unto Death" 346
 The Lord's Second Coming 347
 Some Items of Interest 348
 Holiday Remembrancers 348
 Interesting Letters 350
 Whom the Lord Loves He Chastens . . 350
 British Conditions Grow Serious . . 351
 Carefully Studied Vow--Then Accepted It . 351

R5988 : page 338

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DEATH OF CHARLES T. RUSSELL

The sudden death of Pastor Charles Taze Russell, Editor of THE WATCH TOWER, has created a profound impression upon his many friends throughout the world. Hundreds of letters and telegrams received, further evidence the love and esteem in which he was held, and express unqualified desire to cooperate in continuing the great cause for which he stood so many years.

Brother Russell left Brooklyn in the evening of October 16, to fill appointments in the West and Southwest, but was obliged to start homeward before his scheduled time, owing to ill health.

It was on a Sante Fe train at Pampa, Tex., that he died. Brother Menta Sturgeon, who accompanied him on the trip as his Secretary, telegraphed the information to the headquarters of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY at Brooklyn, adding that "he died a hero."

The body lay in state at Bethel Home Saturday, and at The Temple throughout the day Sunday.

In the afternoon at the hour of 2, funeral service was held for the congregation, and in the evening a service was conducted for the public.

At about midnight the body was taken to Allegheny, Pa., where in the Carnegie Hall, at 2 in the afternoon of Monday, service was held by the Pittsburgh congregation, of which he had been resident Pastor for many years.

Interment took place in Rosemont United Cemeteries at Allegheny, in the Bethel Family plot, according to his request.

We rejoice to know that instead of sleeping in death, as the saints of old, he is numbered among those whose "works follow with him." He has met the dear Lord in the air, whom he so loved as to

lay down his life faithfully in His service.

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

Foreign Agencies:--British Branch: LONDON TABERNACLE,
Lancaster Gate, London, W. German Branch: Unterdorner Str., 76,
Barmen. Australasian Branch: Flinders Building, Flinders St., Melbourne.
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A MEMORIAL NUMBER

Owing to the fact that this issue of THE WATCH TOWER
was ready for press at the time of Brother Russell's death,
the Society decided to insert a brief notice, with the announcement
that the following issue, December 1, will be in the
nature of a Memorial Number.

Brother Russell's Will provides for the continuance of the
publication of THE WATCH TOWER, for which he left ample
manuscript to insure its publication for an indefinite period.
The affairs of THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
will likewise be continued according to provision made by
him before death.

Anyone desiring extra copies of the Memorial Number
will please advise us immediately. Extra copies at the usual
price--5c each.

WATCH TOWER BIBLES

Our present stock is nearly exhausted. The prices of

these Bibles will be advanced on November 15, 1916.

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I.B.S.A. BEREAN BIBLE STUDIES
FOR MONTH OF DECEMBER
QUESTIONS FROM
MANUAL ON SERIES THIRD
"STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES"
STUDY VIII.--"RESTORATION OF ISRAEL"
Week of Dec. 3..Q. 8 to 14 Week of Dec. 17..Q. 22 to 28
Week of Dec. 10..Q. 15 to 21 Week of Dec. 24..Q. 29 to 35
Week of Dec. 31....Q. 36 to 42

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R5989 : page 339

"THE EARTH TREMBLED"--AND FELL

"His lightnings enlightened the world;
the earth saw, and trembled."--Psalm 97:4.

GOD'S holy Prophets of the Old Testament and
of the New give us numerous pictures of
our day and the events now taking place in
the world. The Psalmist David, taking
prophetically a standpoint of observation
future from his day declared, "The Lord
reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude
of isles be glad thereof!" (Psalm 97:1.)
As we have shown in SCRIPTURE
STUDIES, Vol. III., Study 9, this began to be
true when our Lord Jesus, having returned to earth to set
up His Kingdom, took unto Himself His great power. Yet
not until His Kingdom has been fully established in the
earth will His glorious Reign be clearly recognized.

That the Prophet David is referring especially to the
present time, from 1878 down to the full inauguration of
the Kingdom, is clear from his succeeding statement:
"Clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness
and judgment are the habitation of His Throne. A
fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies round
about." How true it is that the storm clouds are all about
us in this Day of the Kingly presence of Jehovah's great
Representative, the Executor of His great Purposes!
Daily the darkness of gloom and perplexity deepens on
every side for those not acquainted with Jehovah's purposes.

"A FIRE GOETH BEFORE HIM"

If we inquire, Why is this Day of His presence such
a Time of Trouble and distress of nations? the answer
comes, Because righteousness and judgment are the habitation
of His Throne, and He is judging the nations and
weighing them in the balance. Judgment is being laid to

the line and righteousness to the plummet (Isaiah 28:17), to the intent that ere long the equitable principles of His Government may be established in all the earth. Not only will all unrighteousness be made manifest, but "a fire goeth before Him and burneth up His enemies." (Psalm 97:3.) All the wilful and persistent opposers of His righteous course shall be "cut off," "destroyed," "burned up," "devoured with the fire of His jealousy."--Zeph. 3:8.

This work of judgment and the consequent Time of Trouble being a necessary preparation for the glorious Reign of Righteousness that shall immediately succeed it, and all being wisely directed by the High and Holy One, who is "too wise to err, too good to be unkind," the Prophet bids us discern in it an abundant cause for rejoicing and gladness. (See Psalm 96:9-13; 98:1-9.) Indeed, there is great cause for rejoicing, not only among the saints, but in the whole earth; and it is the privilege of the saints to tell the glad tidings to all who will hear.

But whether men hear or whether they forbear, let us tell it out, and by and by when the great afflictions of this Judgment hour begin to seal the instruction upon the hearts of men, then the blessed testimony will be as healing balm. They will see that He who smote them in His wrath, and scourged them in His hot displeasure, is also merciful and gracious, and unwilling that they should perish, but desirous rather that they should turn unto Him, obey His counsels and live.

LIGHTNING FLASHES FROM THE THRONE

It is in the midst of the clouds and darkness of this Day of Trouble incident to the setting up of Messiah's Kingdom that the statement of the Prophet is verified: "His lightnings enlightened the world; the earth saw, and trembled." How apt is this figure! Truly like lightning flashes in the midst of the gloom and perplexity of this cloudy day, come to men the remarkable glimpses of the great principles of Truth and Righteousness in contrast with which the world's present disorder is so manifest! A flash of lightning from the obscured Throne discloses here one error, and there another, and another.

Soon the whole world will be aroused. Already it is largely so. Every day adds to the intensity of the trouble, and the whole world trembles for fear, not knowing what the outcome will be, but dreading the worst. The editorials of some of our great newspapers read as if written from the standpoint of Present Truth, so remarkably do they foretell what they declare to be almost certain to follow this present terrible war. Revolution and black anarchy are freely prophesied, to precede a great reconstruction period. The great French Revolution is referred to in contrast, as an April shower compared to a destructive hurricane of the tropics. How truly are the Master's words concerning this time being fulfilled-- "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for apprehension of the things coming on the earth!"--Luke 21:26.

It is remarkable that these lightning flashes are continually calling attention to the Word of God, to the Golden Rule, to the equal rights and privileges of human brotherhood, to the faultless character and loving and self-sacrificing disposition of Jesus Christ, to the Law of Love in contrast with the law of selfishness everywhere prevailing. It seems remarkable, too, how often in these days of war and stress worldly men are drawing attention to the prophecies of the Scriptures, and wondering whether present conditions, and the troubles which all intelligent people see just ahead, are not fulfilments of these Bible prophecies. All this is leading men to reason of righteousness and of coming judgments (Acts 24:25), when they hope and believe that in some way present

R5989 : page 340

wrongs will be righted and righteousness established.

By the sudden, and now increasingly frequent, flashes of light which issue from the storm clouds that surround the invisible, spiritual presence of our glorious King, these principles of the Word of God are being illuminated and brought to the front for the consideration of all men. They are discussed not only in the daily press, but in our popular periodicals, in the official labor organs, in stores and factories, in counting-rooms, in the market-places, at public gatherings. Even heathen nations are discussing them, and are contrasting both the daily lives of professed Christians and the present course of the professed Christian nations with the character and the teachings of the great Founder of the Christian religion, extolling the latter and ridiculing the former.

"THE EARTH SAW--AND TREMBLED"

As a result of God's lightning flashes which are enlightening the world, there is great commotion everywhere manifest. Never before have such conditions prevailed. There are ominous mutterings of dissatisfaction, unrest; and the whole current of popular thought throughout the earth is set in a revolutionary direction. The lightning flashes are revealing the corruption in the world, the dishonesty in high places, and showing men that they are living far below the dignity of manhood. But how to right things they are not able to see; and the conflicting ideas, voices, theories and threats, reveal the facts which the Prophets foretold; for "the nations are angry," "the heathen [Gentiles, peoples] rage," and the whole earth trembles from the din of a wordy conflict and from the blows which even now are beginning to arouse the world.

"ZION HEARD--AND WAS GLAD"

But in the midst of all this trouble and tumult in the world, what is the attitude of the Lord's truly consecrated and faithful people? Are they, too, in fear? As the

judgments of the Lord fall heavily upon the wayward and disobedient so that the whole earth reels and staggers as a drunken man (Psalms 107:27), are the saints in dismay and distress? Ah, no; for it is written, "Zion heard, and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced, because of Thy judgments, O Lord!" It is the "sinners in Zion" that are "afraid." Psalm 91 and 46 show why the saints rejoice and are restful of heart while others weep and lament. It is because they "dwell in the secret place of the Most High [represented by the Holy of the typical Tabernacle], and abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (as the typical Tabernacle was covered by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night). It is because God is their "Refuge and Strength." "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His Covenant."--Psalm 25:14.

These dwellers in the secret place of the Most High are provided in these perilous times with a clear knowledge of the Divine Plan, with its times and seasons, which enables them to see both the necessity for the present method of Divine discipline upon the world and also the peaceable fruits of righteousness which shall result therefrom. In the midst of the storm and battle of this great Day of the Lord, they hear the commanding voice of the Lord of armies, and their hearts rejoice; for they have full confidence in His ability to bring order out of all the confusion. They realize that in the judgments of this Day it is the Lord that speaks from Heaven--from the high place of authority and control; therefore they give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness (Psalm 30:4) --of His Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, which insure His doing all things well.

THE HEEDLESS WHO WILL NOT HEAR

But the Psalmist intimated that, while the world at large would be in ignorance of the real portent of present events, and therefore in fear and dread, and while the saints, with clear knowledge, will be rejoicing and lifting up their heads, because they see the outcome, some--heedless both of the world's distress and of the Voice which speaketh from Heaven--will still boast themselves of their idols. He says, "Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols." These words call to mind the warning of the Apostle Paul: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh from Heaven." (Hebrews 12:25.) St. Paul addresses these words to those who know the Lord's voice and recognize it, warning them against at any time refusing longer to heed it, when He speaks in wrath and judgment.

But alas! there are some who heed not the warning, and who, although they recognize the voice of the Lord,

R5990 : page 340

refuse longer to obey it. They turn away from Him that

speakeh from Heaven, toward the idols which their wayward hearts have set up instead of God. These "graven images" are indeed the work of their own hands--the human philosophies, and science--"falsely so called"--of this evil day. And those who reject the testimony of God, when once they have heard it, invariably fall into some one of the many forms of idolatrous worship now so prevalent; or else they drift restlessly from one to another of them.

All such shall surely be confounded; they shall be put to shame and confusion; their idols shall be destroyed. The wilful sinner, once enlightened and blessed with the hallowed influences of the Holy Spirit and the Truth, shall not, the Apostle declared, escape the just punishment for his deeds. Heb. 12:14-19 points out this danger to the children of God, and warns them of the fearful penalties of turning away from the holy commandment delivered unto them. The Apostle Paul here depicts the scenes accompanying the inauguration of the old Law Covenant, and shows it to be a picture of events which will accompany the establishment of the New Law Covenant, at the close of this present Age, under the greater than Moses--our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Mountain (Kingdom) of the Lord's House is now being established in the top of the mountains, superseding the great kingdoms of this world, and is being exalted above the hills--the smaller governments. (Isaiah 2:2.) Clouds and darkness, trouble and perplexity and distress of nations are round about; and the thunders and lightnings are making all the earth to tremble as did Israel at Mt. Sinai. (Exodus 19:1-25.) And now--since the Spring of 1878--God has "set His King upon His Holy Hill of Zion." (Psalm 2:6.) Therefore, if those who refused to obey Moses, and presumptuously disgraced the ceremonies of the occasion at Sinai, met with instant death, how can we escape if we disregard the voice of the great Mediator of the New Covenant, and the remarkable circumstances which now accompany its establishment?

CLOSING THOUGHTS

We see the deepening clouds of trouble. We hear the thunder tones of judgment that "call the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof" (Psalm 50:1) --from the east to the west. We see the lightning flashes of Truth and Righteousness, and observe how the whole earth is now in the shaking process which will eventuate in the complete overthrow of all existing institutions, systems and governments. Present events indeed speak in trumpet tones. How shall we regard these things? Surely, dear brethren, it will be with thoughtful

R5990 : page 341

and reverent hearts! Surely we shall watch and pray, lest "a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of

us should seem to come short of it!" (Hebrews 4:1.) We shall guide our course with the greatest carefulness that we may make our calling and election sure.

In this eventful period everything that can be shaken will be shaken, that only the unshakable things of truth and righteousness may remain. (Hebrews 12:25-29.) Every one called to share in the coming Kingdom must be a lover of righteousness, one who will courageously and lovingly stand for the Truth however much it may be spoken against. All others will be shaken out of this company. The snares and delusions of this "evil day" are accomplishing this very work. In the end only the true will remain. "Seeing that we look for these things [let us] be diligent, that we may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Peter 3:14), ready for the entrance into that rest which yet remains.

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R5990 : page 341

ONE OF THE MASTER'S FORCEFUL AND BEAUTIFUL LESSONS

"Consider the lilies of the field,
how they grow."--Matthew 6:28.

MANY and varied are the precious lessons taught by the Master during His earthly ministry, and they never grow old. To the true disciple of Christ they are ever new, ever fresh. Whether He taught by the seaside or on the mountains or by the wayside, as He walked and talked with His chosen Twelve, His words of wisdom and grace come to us vibrant with meaning, pulsating with life, full of strength and power, cheering, encouraging and blessing our hearts.

In using these words under our consideration, our Lord, as was His custom, drew an illustration of something familiar to all His hearers. God's care over the lilies seemed a fitting reminder of His greater care over His own people, of His infinite Wisdom, Power and Love. He who so carefully supervised the clothing of the simple flower--which bloomed only to fade in a day--that its robes were more regal than the kingly vesture of Solomon, would surely provide for the clothing of those who trusted in Him!

SOME HAVE HIS PROMISE--SOME HAVE NOT

Undoubtedly much that our Lord said to the Jews would not have been said to Gentiles; for the Gentiles were then under the general curse and condemnation --the whole world was alienated from God. The people of Israel alone had been brought back into covenant relationship with God, through the Law Covenant made at

Mount Sinai; hence different words would be applicable to them. Having come into relationship with God, His promises were theirs. All things should work for their blessing--their cattle, their fields, everything, would be blessed of the Lord, if they would be faithful to Him. Our Lord was, therefore, in line with this thought, exhorting the children of Israel to have greater confidence in God, greater trust in Him who had chosen them to be His peculiar people.

We, like the Master, should make a clear distinction between the persons to whom we would give consolation and assurances of God's care, and all others. We are to remember that some have come into His family and some have not! that some have His promises as theirs, and some have not. We are not to deceive others and to imply that they have a right to claim as their own, promises which were never given to them. Rather, we shall do them more good if we point out that these promises are conditional--only for those who make a covenant with the Lord under the special arrangement open during this Gospel Age. To the Christian this lesson of unfailing trust and confidence in God is a very important one, and to have learned it represents a very considerable growth in grace and in knowledge--in the spirit of love, which casts out all fear. It means a nearness to God, a fellowship with Him, which those who have not learned this lesson cannot enjoy.

THE WORLD'S HEAVY BURDENS

To the people whom the Master generally addressed, the matter of providing for the necessities of life was a very important one. He rarely had the very rich amongst His audience, generally the poor; and the poor in Palestine and other Eastern countries find it very difficult to obtain food, clothing, etc. In many parts of the world today, especially in India, there are people who scarcely ever go to bed without going hungry; and to these the necessities of life are a very important consideration.

Our Lord Jesus indicated that this was so in His time, saying that the important consideration with most people was, "What shall we eat and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" They were anxious and worried. "After these things do the Gentiles seek," said the Master. Their object in life was to procure food and raiment. That was the burden of their prayer. And even the Jews, though professedly the people of God, had not learned implicit trust in Him, but were to a large extent grasping after the material things, seeking chiefly worldly gain rather than the true riches. Our Lord said that His disciples were to realize that God knew what things they had need of before they asked Him, and should rest fully content in the matter of what God would provide them respecting their temporalities. Jesus wished them to be sure that God would so supervise their interests that they should not want anything really good

and needful to them.

This seems to be the whole lesson that our Lord was inculcating in bringing in this illustration from nature-- "Consider the lilies of the field." It was a forceful reminder that the things of the Kingdom were the things of paramount importance, and that in seeking these things first, they might have the assurance that all needed earthly things should be theirs.

PROPER CONSIDERATION OF THE LILY

What is it that we are to consider about the lilies? "How they grow!" What does this mean? Jesus Himself answers, "They toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." That is, the lilies grow in a very reasonable way; they develop grace and beauty, and are adorned in robes of loveliness without putting forth unnatural, unusual stress or effort. They are not worried about growing. The lily does not wake up in the morning and say, "Now, I wonder if I can make another quarter of an inch today. I wonder if I shall be able to grow as fast and to look as beautiful as that lily over there; and I wonder what people will think about me." It simply assimilates what it can absorb from the earth, and from the atmosphere what God has provided for it there. It does not say, "I think that I shall go to another place, I cannot grow here," but it does the best it can wherever it happens to be.

The lilies of Palestine to which our Lord referred were evidently not the kind of flowers that we generally term lilies, but were apparently of some other plant family, and a very numerous species, we should judge,

R5991 : page 342

growing everywhere. Those who are accustomed to the flowers of Palestine point to a common reddish flower which they think was meant by "the lilies of the field."

Our lesson, then, as New Creatures, is that since we have given our hearts to the Lord we are not to be worried, anxious, about the things of the present life. Nor are we to be over-anxious regarding our spiritual growth. We are simply to do our best, and trust the growing to Him. But we are to be particularly engaged respecting the things God has promised us as New Creatures in Christ, that we may make our calling and election sure and attain to the glories which our Father has in reservation for those who love Him. If we give our attention to these things, the Master assures us, the Heavenly Father will so supervise our affairs that we shall not lack any necessity of a spiritual kind or of an earthly kind. He will give us whatever of spiritual blessings and of temporal blessings we need as spirit-begotten children of God that we may finish our course with joy.

We are not to interpret our Lord's words to mean

that we are to neglect our proper duties in life; that He would not have us do any more spinning or toiling than the lilies do; that He would not have us labor with our hands and our brains in order to care for our family, home, etc. Surely not! for these things are inculcated in the Word of God. Here, evidently, He is merely impressing us with the thought that while we are doing to the very best of our ability in harmony with the surroundings and conditions which God has provided for us, we are not to be worried. We are to be as free from anxious care as are the lilies, to be fully content and to look up in faith to our Heavenly Father, expecting and accepting His providential care and overruling in all our affairs and interests.

"Just leave all with Him; lilies do, and they grow;
They grow in the rain and they grow in the snow.
 Yes, they grow.
They grow in the darkness, all hid in the night,
Or if in the sunshine, revealed by the light,
 Still they grow.
They ask not your planting; they need not your care
 As they grow;
Dropped down in the valley, the field, anywhere,
 There they grow--
In garments of beauty, arrayed in pure white,
All radiant in glory from heaven's own light--
 Sweetly grow."

REST AND PEACE IN PERFECT TRUST

God knows all about our circumstances. If we need to be transplanted to another place, into a different kind of soil, where our new nature can better thrive and expand, or where our reasonable, temporal needs can be better obtained, He can arrange for it. He knows just what is good for us, best for us, temporally and spiritually. It is our part to look for His leadings, not attempting to take the helm into our own hands, nor concluding that the Lord will never change our conditions, etc. If it is best for us that they shall be changed, He will change them, if we trust in Him; and surely, if we are His children, it is His will that we desire, not our own! We are to be perfectly restful under whatever conditions or circumstances we find ourselves, restful in the thought, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him."--Matthew 6:8.

Will this not mean sometimes strong tests of faith and endurance, if the conditions of our lot are painful and hard to bear? It may be such; but if the Lord's providence does not for a time offer a way of escape, we may be sure that the test will prove one of the "all things" that will work out our good, if we submit sweetly to His will and wait for Him to point out a different way, if it shall seem best to Him. Let us as lilies of His planting, bloom for the glory of our Heavenly Husbandman.

ASKING FOR DAILY NEEDS

While Jesus tells us that we should ask, "Give us this day our daily bread," this is not a specification of what we would prefer to have in a temporal way. We are not to specify things that would be most pleasing to our palate. We are to leave that part to Him. We are merely to acknowledge that we are dependent upon Him for the necessities of life, that we are looking to Him, that we are waiting on His providence and will accept those things which His Wisdom provides as proper for us in connection with the instructions of His Word.

So on we go, growing daily, happy and content in God, and preparing for the Kingdom; for Christians who cannot learn now, under present conditions, to trust in God, would probably not be able to learn this lesson under other conditions. Present conditions are especially helpful, indeed, for those who would cultivate trust, dependence upon the Lord. In this respect we see that the poor have an advantage over the rich; and it was those who were poor, like the lilies of the field, that our Lord Jesus was addressing in the words of our text. And it is to those who are poor in spirit, who realize their own impotency, who long for the rest and peace that Jesus alone can give, who come to Him for this rest, that all the Master's gracious promises and lessons of wisdom, comfort and instruction are given.

"O flower of Heavenly birth, blooming in earthly soil,
Taking on fairest hues from sun and wind and rain,
Soon shall thy beauty grace the Heavenly realms Above,
Transplanted to a fairer clime to bud and bloom again!"

"HOW LONG, OH LORD, HOW LONG?"

How long, oh Lord, how long
Shall weakness serve the strong?
How long shall Might make Right,
And darkness hate the light?

How long, oh Lord, how long,
Till Truth shall crush the wrong,
Till darkness turn to day,
And sorrow flee away?

How long till wars shall cease,
This turmoil end in peace?
How long the sin-cursed Earth
Await her second birth?

How long, Lord, must I feel
The proud oppressor's heel?
I'm weary of the night,

I long for morning light!

I long to see Thy face,
I long for Thine embrace--
How long, Lord, till I come
To my long-promised home?

* * *

Not long, my child, not long;
Be brave, be true, be strong!
The Day-star doth appear,
The Kingdom draweth near!

Look up, my child, look up,
The last drop's in thy Cup!
Trust where thou canst not see--
I soon will call for thee!

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

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R5991 : page 343

"JESUS CHRIST--THE FIRST AND THE LAST"

--DECEMBER 3.--REVELATION 1:1-8,17-20.--

THE MESSAGE OF THE RISEN CHRIST--THE APOSTLE JOHN REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEET-MEMBERS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST--IN A TRANCE HE SAW A SERIES OF VISIONS OF THE LEADING EVENTS OF THE GOSPEL AGE, THE SEVEN STAGES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOSPEL CHURCH AND THE SETTING UP OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM--A SYMBOLICAL PICTURE OF OUR GLORIFIED LORD--THE WORD LIKENED TO A TWO-EDGED SWORD.

"Fear not; I am the First and the Last, and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore."--Verses 17,18. R.V.

VISIONS are not realities, although symbolically representing them. This is true, whether the visions come as Daniel the Prophet describes his or whether they come in broad daylight, as did the transfiguration scene, which our Lord declared was a vision. (Daniel 7:1; Matthew 17:9.) The visions granted to St. John, recorded in the Revelation, are in no sense to be understood as realities; and this is the significance of his statement, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day."

Note the simplicity of the introduction to this most wonderful Book. The Apostle did not write the title as it appears in our Bibles--"The Revelation of St. John the Divine." On the contrary, he claims no credit for the

revelation; for it was not his. As he distinctly explains, it was from our Lord Jesus Christ, and to Him from God the Father. Nor was it even to St. John in any special sense; but, as he again declares, unto God's servants, sent by His "servant John." This simplicity, common to all the Apostles, commends them to us as men of humble mind--the very kind we should expect our Lord to use as special messengers to His people. This simplicity, this absence of boastfulness, so noticeable in the writings of all the Apostles, marks them as being in the ministry, not for the gratification of vanity, or for earthly rewards of any kind, but simply as the servants of God, who delighted to do His will, and to tell the Good Tidings, to the utter ignoring of themselves, except in so far as mention of themselves and their affairs might be necessary.

St. John was instructed to write, to make clear, to God's people the things already brought to his attention, and other things subsequently to be thus brought, to the intent that God's people might be enabled to comprehend with all saints the lengths, the breadths, the heights and depths of the Love of God, which passeth understanding, and which can be received only through revelation from God. And here let us note the force of the Apostle's statement (Verse 3) to the effect that there is a blessing upon those who read this revelation, even though they do not understand, and a special blessing upon those who hear and understand the words of this prophecy, and who conform their lives to the things therein written.

THE RISEN CHRIST'S MESSAGE

At the time of this vision St. John was a prisoner, exiled to the Isle of Patmos, a penal colony of those days--a rocky, barren island in the Aegean Sea. The crime for which he suffered this banishment was his faithfulness as the Lord's mouthpiece. At the time he must have been about ninety years of age--supposing that none of our Lord's disciples were younger than Himself at the beginning of His ministry.

St. John, the beloved disciple, in some measure or degree represented the last living members of the Body of Christ. Doubtless this was the meaning of our Lord's statement, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John 21:20-23.) St. John did not tarry; but a class whom in some respects he illustrated are represented as tarrying--a class that see with the eyes of their understanding the visions and revelations which the beloved disciple saw in symbols in a trance.

If, then, St. John's exile in any degree represents ostracism which the Lord's followers may expect in the close of this Age--a complete isolation from others and a treatment implying that they are prisoners--they may take comfort from the thought that as our Lord's favor and revelation to St. John more than offset his persecutions, so the opening of our eyes of understanding and the granting to us of greater knowledge and appreciation of

our Lord and of the Divine Plan will far more than offset the various experiences which in His providence God may permit to come upon us. His assurance is that all things shall work together for good to those who love God. Whoever rests his faith securely upon the Divine promise may indeed with the Apostle Paul count all things else as loss and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.--Philippians 3:8.

Presumably the Apostle had this vision on the first day of the week, now generally called Sunday. To Christians it is peculiarly the Lord's day--the day on which our Savior rose from the dead, and on which all the promises of God's Word received life and our hopes through Christ were quickened. We may see in the expression also a reference to the Millennial Age, called frequently in Scripture "The Day of the Lord." According to our understanding of Bible chronology we today are living in the early dawn of this Day of Christ; and it is here, properly enough, that we begin to see the wonderful things of the Divine Character and Plan. But to see and to understand we must be "in the spirit." Only those who have become New Creatures in Christ can be expected to appreciate spiritual things; and this is the class which the Apostle John represented.

There are many reasons for concluding that while the messages were given to the seven churches specified, and were applicable to them, nevertheless these messages should properly have a still wider application to the whole Church of Christ, the number seven representing completeness and the order representing different epochs in the history of the Church. Thus the Church at Ephesus would represent the condition of the Church at the time of the writing of the messages; while the Laodicean Church would represent the Church in our day--in the end of the Gospel Age. The other churches would correspondingly represent different epochs intermediate, between then and now.

To think otherwise would be to attach too much importance to these seven comparatively small churches of Asia Minor, and would have implied an ignoring of other churches more influential than they; for instance, the churches at Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, etc. Furthermore, the details of the messages given these churches fit historically the one Church of the Living God, over every member of which our Lord has a care. This thought that the number seven signifies completeness we find emphasized in other symbolical representations--seven spirits, seven golden candlesticks, seven stars, etc.

"THE FIRST-BORN OF THEM THAT SLEPT"

Verse 5 clearly teaches what the creeds of Christendom ignore, and what is in direct antagonism to their statements; namely, that the risen Christ was "the first born of the dead." That is to say, our Lord was the first to experience a resurrection in the full sense of the

word, the first to experience a resurrection to perfection

R5991 : page 344

and eternal life. Although some before Him were temporally awakened, they relapsed again into death; for they were only partial illustrations of resurrection, to assure men of the Divine Power to accomplish it fully in the due time appointed of God.

Verse 7 clearly teaches that at the time of our Lord's Second Advent the world will be far from converted to God; for "all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Some Scriptures taken disconnectedly seem to teach that the world will be converted before His return; but when God's Word and Plan are viewed as a whole, these will be found to favor the opposite view--that Christ comes before the conversion of the world and for the very purpose of converting all mankind; and that the glorified Church of the Gospel Age shall share with her Lord and Head in His Reign, which is God's appointed means of blessing the world.

Christ and the glorified Church, made "partakers of the Divine nature," will be spirit beings, invisible to men. Our Lord's presence will be manifested to the world by exhibitions of power and great glory. He will not be visible to natural sight, but to the eyes of understanding, as these shall open to an appreciation of the great changes which earth's new Ruler shall effect. His presence and His righteous authority will be recognized in both the punishments and the blessings which will flow to mankind from His Reign.

Our King will reveal Himself gradually. Some will discern the new Ruler sooner than will others. But ultimately "every eye shall see [Greek, horao, discern] Him." But "He cometh with clouds." And while the clouds of trouble hang heavy and dark, when the mountains--kingdoms of this world--are trembling and falling, when the earth--organized society--is being shaken and disintegrated, some will begin to realize that Jehovah's Anointed is taking to Himself His great power and is beginning His work of laying justice to the line and righteousness to the plummet. For He must reign until He shall have put down all authority and laws on earth which are contrary to those controlling in Heaven.

WHAT THE BELOVED DISCIPLE SAW

St. John's attention was first attracted by a trumpet-like voice of Christ from behind him. The fact that its location is mentioned implies that it has a symbolic meaning. It signifies that the beginning of this Message was not in St. John's day, nor in the future, but that the things revealed had already commenced and were already to some extent in the past. As some features of the Revelation show, the voice from behind went back to the time of our Lord's earthly ministry.

Turning and looking, the Apostle saw in symbol what the Lord's people may now see with the eye of faith and understanding. He saw One like a son of man--like a man, like a priest, as implied by the clothes described--walking amongst seven golden candlesticks, caring for them, trimming the wicks, seeing to the supply of oil, etc. Thus our Lord Jesus, our glorified Master, although absent from us, has protected the interests of His Cause throughout the past eighteen centuries, and has directed respecting His people's affairs, especially inspecting and caring for the Church as a light-bearer, a candlestick. Alas, how poor the wicks have sometimes been! How feeble the light that has sometimes shone out into the darkness of this world! How much trimming has been necessary, and how much more may yet be required!

In the Tabernacle, and subsequently in Solomon's Temple, the Golden Candlestick was placed by the Lord's direction--not seven candlesticks, but one with seven branches, representing the whole Church during this Gospel Age. In the Revelation the same candlestick, or lampstand, is brought to our attention; but the parts are separated--the union, the relationship between them, being supplied by our Redeemer, the antitypical High Priest. The lampstand symbolized the Lord's nominal people of this Gospel Age, including the members of His mystical Body. It holds forth the light of life, which shines in the darkness and which He directed should be let so shine that men might see our good works and glorify our Father in Heaven.--Matthew 5:16.

Alas! The Master evidently found but few good works, found but little glorifying light shining out from His earthly representatives in many of the seven epochs of the history of the Church. This fact is indicated by His messages, chidings, encouragements, etc., given to each of these epoch-churches represented by the different candlesticks, or lampstands. It is to be noted that the candlestick, or lampstand, represents the nominal Church of Christ, rather than the true Church. This is shown by the fact that in addressing each of these churches the Lord finds fault with the many and approves the faithful few, especially so in the last, the seventh, the Laodicean Church of our day.

THE APPEARANCE OF CHRIST

We are not to regard the word picture of Verses 13-16 as a portrait of our Lord in glory; for it is merely symbolical. When we shall see Him in glory He will not look as here described. Nevertheless this symbolical picture has precious lessons for us, more valuable than an attempt to describe to our minds the appearance of our Lord as a Spirit Being, "dwelling in light which no man can approach unto," and which we cannot appreciate until we shall be changed to "be like Him and to see Him as He is."--1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 15:50-53.

His head and His hair as white as wool and snow tell

us of His wisdom, His splendor and His glory. His eyes like a flame of fire tell us in symbol that our Master is all-seeing, omniscient; that He is not deceived by outward forms and ceremonies; but that He can, and does, read every thought and intent of the heart. The contemplation of His glance should of itself purge and purify our hearts to the extent of our ability, to put far from us everything which would have His disapproval.

Having described the head, St. John mentions the hands and the feet. The remainder of the body was covered with a garment reaching from the head to the feet. This may possibly represent the fact that the glory of Christ was manifested in His own person, in His own ministry, and in that of His Twelve Apostles, His representatives --St. Paul taking the place of Judas; and that with their death the body of Truth was almost veiled throughout the eighteen centuries intervening, until now, in the end of the Age, the Feet members of the Body of Christ will be illuminated by the Truth and will shine forth--not like the Head, but as polished brass.

THE MASTER'S COMFORTING MESSAGE

When we think of the great advantage which we of the present day possess, we are inclined to say, "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holiness of living and God-likeness!" We have shining upon us with almost burning brightness the focused rays of Divine inspiration and revelation from the past 6,000 years. How it should consume in us all the dross of selfishness! How it should purify us! How humble it should make us! Even in our flesh we should be polished, bright, luminous representatives of our glorious Lord and Head.

The countenance of the majestic One present amongst

R5991 : page 345

the candlesticks is said to be like lightning. So great was the splendor that St. John fell as dead when he beheld it, just as Daniel did in the presence of the mighty One whom he saw, and just as Saul of Tarsus did before the majesty presented to him. (Daniel 10:4-11; Acts 9:3-9.) So it is symbolically with the Christian, when once he gets a glimpse of the glories of the Divine character. When once we get a true view of Him with whom we have to do, as the great Heart-searcher and Caretaker of His Church, we fall before Him, humbled to the dust, realizing that we are imperfect, that we cannot stand before our Master, that we are unworthy of His favor and blessing.

But as our Lord touched St. John gently, raising him up, so He has spoken to us comfort, peace and love, assuring us that we have a High Priest that can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, One who is able to sympathize and mercifully to assist, One who has bought us with His own precious blood, and who has accepted us and will number us as His Body members as long as we abide

in Him, seeking in our hearts to know and to do His will.
To us His comforting assurance is:

(1) "Fear not." The same message the Father has sent us through the Prophet, saying, "Their fear of Me is not of Me, but is taught by the precepts of men." (Isaiah 29:13.) This is one of the first lessons which we must learn. We cannot come into close sympathy with our Lord and be taught of Him respecting other features of His Plan until we learn to fear not, learn to have confidence in Him as the One "who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood," and whose purposes toward us continually are for our welfare and, if we submit ourselves to His guidance, will bring us off conquerors and more than conquerors.

(2) "I am the First and the Last." We must recognize that our Lord is the One who was the beginning of the creation of God and the end of it, the One by whom are all things, the One who is next to the Father, His very Representative in everything pertaining to the affairs of the Universe. (Colossians 1:15; Revelation 3:14; John 1:1-3; 1 Corinthians 8:6.) (3) We must recognize Him as the One who was dead, the One who really died for our sins, but who was as really raised out of death by the Father. (4) We must realize that He is alive for evermore, that death has no more dominion over Him, that the work is finished, that neither sacrifices of the Mass nor death in any sense or form ever will be needed. His work is perfect; and, as He cried on the Cross, "It is finished!"

(5) We must recognize that He has the keys, the authority, the power over the tomb, to deliver from it all who are therein imprisoned. We must also realize that He has the key, the power over death, in order that those whom He liberates from the prison-house of death, like those who have not yet gone into the tomb, but who are under the death sentence, may all be ultimately delivered, set free from the dominion of Sin and Death, delivered into the full liberty of the Sons of God--righteousness and life everlasting.--Romans 8:21.

"IN HIS RIGHT HAND SEVEN STARS"

This One whom we thus know, thus recognize, as the Instructor and Caretaker of the candlesticks, we are also to recognize as having in His right hand--in His favor as well as His power--seven stars, the angels, the messengers, of the seven Churches. Apparently the stars represent special ministers, or servants of the Church. In Revelation 12:1 the Church is pictured as a Woman crowned with twelve stars. These stars evidently represent the Twelve Apostles as the special lights of the Church. Similarly, in the picture before us, the seven stars which the Lord holds in His right hand seem to represent special light-bearers in the Church--in each of its seven phases or stages of development. That they are in His right hand seems to teach us that these should be considered as in some special sense under the Master's

guidance, protection and care in the interest of the Churches which they represented.

It will be noticed that the messages to the various Churches are addressed to these stars, messengers, angels, as though our Lord would have us understand that the appropriate message for each appropriate epoch in the Church's experience would be sent by the Lord through a particular star, or messenger, whom He would especially commission as His representative. Our Lord Himself is represented by the great light of the sun; and His special messengers in the Church throughout the entire period of the Gospel Age are consistently enough represented as stars.

The difference between the symbols of the star and the candlestick is manifest. The star light is the Heavenly light, the spiritual enlightenment or instruction. The lamp light is the earthly light, representing good works, obedience, etc., of those who nominally constitute the Lord's Church in the world, and who are exhorted not to put their light under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, and to let it so shine that it will glorify their Father in Heaven.

No part of the description could more thoroughly convince us that the description of our Lord given here is a symbolic one than does the statement that out of His mouth proceeded a two-edged sword. As a symbolic picture, however, it is full of meaning, speaking to us of the Word of the Lord, the Sword of the Spirit, "sharper than any two-edged sword." (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12.) It reminds us that our Lord's words are not one-sided, not directed merely against sin in one class, but that His word is sharp, cutting in every direction, that sin is reproved by Him as much when found in His most earnest followers as when found elsewhere. It assures us that none need attempt to pluck out the mote from his brother's eye without first getting rid of the beam in his own eye; and that if we do not show mercy to those who are our debtors we must not expect mercy from Him who has proposed to extend His mercy toward us.

How heart-searching is God's Word when we understand it--not merely as a compendium of rules and regulations, but when we catch the spirit of it! Then we come to see that its requirement is love out of a pure heart; first, to the Heavenly Father; secondly, to our Lord and Head; thirdly, to all His brethren; fourthly, to the world in general, groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for the blessings of the coming Day of Christ; and fifthly, toward our enemies also, sympathetically realizing that they are warped, twisted and blinded through the deceitfulness of sin and through the machinations of the great Adversary.--2 Corinthians 4:4.

"Blessed Bible, precious Word!
Boon most sacred from the Lord;
Glory to His name be given,
For this choicest gift from Heaven.

"Tis a ray of purest light,
Beaming through the depths of night;
Brighter than ten thousand gems
Of the costliest diadems.

"Tis a fountain, pouring forth,
Streams of life to gladden earth,
Whence eternal blessings flow--
Antidote for human woe.

"Tis a mine, aye, deeper, too,
Than can mortal ever go;
Search we may for many years,
Still some new, rich gem appears."

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R5992 : page 346

"FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH"

--DECEMBER 10.--REVELATION 2:1-17.--

THE REVELATION A BOOK OF SYMBOLS--SEVEN SUCCESSIVE STAGES
IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH SYMBOLIZED
BY "THE SEVEN CHURCHES WHICH ARE IN ASIA"
--THE NAMES OF THE CHURCHES CHARACTERISTIC--THE
GREAT FALLING AWAY--THE TRUE CHURCH CALLED
"OVERCOMERS"--THE LORD'S RETURN DURING THE LAODICEAN
PERIOD OF CHURCH HISTORY.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will
give thee the Crown of Life."--Verse 10.

WHILE the messages given to the seven churches specified in the Revelation were doubtless applicable to them, they properly have a still wider application to the entire Gospel Church, the number seven representing completeness. The Book of Revelation is a book of symbols, which our Lord "sent and signified [told it in signs and symbols] by His angel unto His servant John." (Revelation 1:1.) Bible students know that the book abounds in symbols, or signs; and we are satisfied that these are the rule, and that the literal is the exception, being used only when unavoidable.

To be in harmony, then, with the rest of the book, "the seven churches which are in Asia" must be symbolic; and as the book is chiefly history written beforehand, they must symbolize seven successive stages in the history of the Christian Church, covering the period between the First Advent and the Second Coming of Christ. The fulfilment, we think, proves the correctness of this position.

In the first chapter we have a description of "One like

unto a son of man," as seen in vision by the Apostle John. Some one or more of the features of this description would seem to be peculiarly appropriate to each of the successive stages of the Church; and in each case He who sends the message is thus described. The last part of each message is a promise to the "overcomers," and is also adapted to the different periods of Church history.

To give a bird's-eye view of the arrangement, we would notice their chronological position. Ephesus covers the period during the lives of the Apostles; Smyrna, the time of the Pagan persecution, reaching to about 325 A.D., when Constantine became Emperor of Rome and declared in favor of Christianity. Pergamos embraces the transition period during which the Papacy had its rise; Thyatira, the space during which the true Church was in the wilderness, and the Apostate Church sat as a queen and lived deliciously with the kings of the earth. Sardis includes a short interval just before the Reformation; Philadelphia, the period from the Reformation until recent times; and Laodicea, the nominal Church of today.

MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS

The word Ephesus means first, desirable. During this period our Lord "holdeth the seven stars in His right hand," etc. (Chapter 1:20.) The messengers of the Churches--St. Paul, St. Peter, St. John, etc.--were so powerfully led and kept in the grasp of our Lord Jesus during this epoch that we accept their teachings as His, believing that their words were really His words. This stage of the Church is commended for its faithful, patient labor and for its discernment of Truth and true teachers. --Acts 20:28-30; 1 Cor. 11:19.

It was characteristic of this period that "they forsook all and followed Him." They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. They sold what they had and gave to those in want. Though often deprived of the bread of this present life, they not only had the Living Bread, but had the promise of "the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." It will be remembered that all the trees in Eden were trees of life, but that the one in the midst of the Garden was then a forbidden tree, the disobedient eating of which brought death upon Adam and all his race. That tree in the midst of Paradise was called "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"; and our Lord's promise in today's Study is that the overcomers of the Gospel Age shall have full liberty to partake of that tree under most blessed and satisfactory conditions, when the knowledge will be of benefit to them under Divine approval, and will not then bring a curse.

TO THE CHURCH OF SMYRNA

Smyrna means bitter. Myrrh and Marah are kindred words. This stage of the Christian Church was the period of most bitter persecution, under the Roman Emperors

from Nero to Diocletian. In His message to the Church of this epoch our Lord styles Himself "the First and the Last, which was dead and is alive." In no other sense or way could He be the First and the Last than as the only direct creation of the Father, through whom all else was created. Any other view would be in conflict with the Scriptures.--Revelation 3:14; Colossians 1:15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; John 1:1-3, Diaglott.

"The Devil shall cast some of you into prison that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days." Thus the Lord informed His faithful servants of this period that theirs would be a time of great persecution. Pagan Rome, here symbolized as the Devil, has been the most devilish of all earthly governments, when viewed in the light of its bloody persecutions. The ten symbolic days refer to the last and most severe persecution under the Roman Emperors--that of the reign of Diocletian, A.D. 303-313. Those who have read the history of this period can understand the depths of the words, "that ye may be tried." Some of the most sublime pictures of Christian endurance that the world has ever seen were enacted during the Smyrna period of the Church. The call was for faithfulness unto death; the promise was that the overcomers should "not be hurt of the Second Death," but should receive the Crown of Life--immortality.

TO THE CHURCH OF PERGAMOS

Pergamos means an earthly elevation. The Speaker is "He who hath the sharp Sword with two edges" [Greek, two-mouthed]--the Word of God. During this period, while the nominal Church was growing popular, the true Christians were tested and proved by the introduction and development of Pagan and Papal ideas. The Pagan

R5993 : page 346

priests, unwilling to lose their positions of honor and influence amongst the people, sought to bend their ideas to fit the new religion. Thus while nominally professing Christianity, they brought many of their former ideas with them into the Christian Church. These were eventually grafted upon the true stock--"the faith once delivered to the saints."--Jude 3.

Thus gradually the Church was led into error, evil practises, and away from God. This is what is meant in Verse 14 by the allusion to Balaam and Balak. It will be remembered that Balaam, who had been a prophet of God, instructed King Balak how to tempt Israel to sin, and thus brought about what he could not accomplish by his own powers. (Numbers 23; 24; 31:16.) So these Pagan priests taught the Church to indulge in spiritual fornication, and thus brought upon her the withering blight of the wrath of God.

The "doctrine of the Nicolaitans" seems to be the theory of lordship or headship in the Church. The strife

as to who should be greatest existed amongst many of the patriarchs--fathers--of the prominent churches. At their councils there was a bitter fight for supremacy. The

R5993 : page 347

tendency was toward an earthly head, and of course many coveted the honor. The patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople and Rome were the most prominent. The first two dropped out of the conflict, but the strife continued for several hundred years between Constantinople and Rome. It was settled only by a division of the Church: the Eastern, or Greek Church, accepting the Patriarch of Constantinople for its head; and the Western, or Papal Church, acknowledging the Bishop--Pope or Father--of Rome.

Many of the true followers of the Master in the churches denounced this attempt to disobey the direct command of Jesus, "Call no man father." (Matthew 23:9.) Of course, they received the promised persecution. (2 Timothy 1:12.) This class in Pergamos is commended by our Lord under the symbol of "Anti-pas, My faithful martyr." In the Greek, anti means against, and Papas signifies father. In this stage of the development of the Church those who sought to be popular received the emoluments of the Church; but the promise to the overcomers is that of pleasure and honor that shall be eternal.

THE CHURCH OF THYATIRA

Thyatira seems to mean "the sweet perfume of sacrifice." It was the period of Papal persecution. The virgin Church was enduring the hardships of the wilderness; while the apostate Church sat on the throne of her royal paramour. The message is sent by Him "who hath eyes like a flame of fire," to watch over His faithful ones as they wandered through the dark valleys or hid in the darker caves of earth; and "feet of hard brass," to walk by their side as they scaled the rugged mountains or wandered footsore and weary, seeking a place to plant the seeds of Truth.

The message contains an allusion to a faithful old Prophet who fled for his life into the wilderness from the wrath of the idolatrous wife of a king. The picture is from the history of the Prophet Elijah. (1 Kings 18; 19.) Jezebel was the protector of the priests of Baal. Her husband was king, and she wielded his power for her own ends. The drouth of three and one-half years was evidently a type of the "time, times and a half"--1260 years--of the spiritual famine, "not of bread nor of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."--Amos 8:11.

THE LORD'S SECOND COMING

Sardis is said to mean that which remains, as if it signified a useless remnant, something out of which life or

virtue had gone. The nominal Church during this period had the appearance of being what it was not, having a form of godliness without its power. Sardis was the remains of the true Church, which had been driven into the wilderness; but when the persecution began to subside, her zeal also abated. Persecution has always developed the vigor of the Church.

Many today have the Sardis characteristics. To such there is a fatal warning in Revelation 3:3. Seven times our Lord's Second Coming is described as being thief-like, stealthy. Only to those who are watching is the approach of a thief known. Those who are asleep will be awakened only after he has taken full possession, after his work of destruction has progressed. Although they may then arouse themselves, it is too late. They have been overtaken. Thus our Lord will be present, but invisible and unknown--except to the watchers--for some years after His arrival; and His presence will be recognized by the sleepers only as the noise of spoiling the Strong Man's House gradually increases. Then slowly will they realize what it is and what the outcome will be.

The reason why many professing Christians cannot recognize our Lord's Parousia--presence--is that they are looking for a fleshly Christ, visible to the fleshly eye, and making an imposing demonstration which they cannot mistake. Failing to realize the fact that spiritual bodies cannot be seen by human eyes without a miracle, they cannot understand how He can be present while "all things continue as they were since the beginning of creation." (2 Peter 3:3,4.) Thus they are unable to understand "the signs of the times," revealing His return.

THE CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA

Philadelphia means brotherly love, as is well known. This stage of the Church's history evidently began at the Reformation; and there are many still living who possess the characteristics described.

There is considerable similarity between the work begun on Pentecost and that of Luther and his friends. The Reformation was, in a sense, the beginning of a new era, a dawning of light where all had been darkness, the separation of the true from the false, and a new start in the way of Truth. No doubt all the powers of Satan were exerted to close the door then opened; but "He that is true" had said, "which no man can shut." Compared with the mighty hosts of their enemies, the little band of Reformers had but "a little strength"; but they knew that they had the Truth, and they fully trusted the Giver. Thus the Master could say, "Thou hast kept My Word, and hast not denied My name."

During the Philadelphian period, especially during the first and the last phases of it, the faithful have either been obliged to come out of the nominal temple or have been cast out for their straight testimony. The reward promised them is that they will be, not simply an unimportant part,

but a vital one--a pillar in the true and eternal Temple--a part which cannot be removed while the structure exists. During their trial state their names were cast out as evil. They were branded as infidels and heretics. They were not recognized as children of God, as citizens of the Heavenly Country, as Christians. All this is to be reversed. "The Lord knoweth them that are His," and in due time will fully and eternally acknowledge them.

THE NOMINAL CHURCH OF TODAY

Laodicea is interpreted to mean a tried, or judged people. The description shows us that they were tried and found wanting. If we understand Christ's meaning in this message, it is sent particularly to those who profess His name, but deny the Truth which He Himself here presents. Let those who read this special message do so with special care.

"The Beginning of the creation of God." "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?" (Matthew 22:42.) This question has had many answers. More Bible and less hymn-book theology would have made the subject clearer to all. The doctrine of the trinity is totally opposed to Scripture, and has not even one reasonable text to support it when the well-known interpolation of 1 John 5:7 is discarded and when John 1:1 is properly understood. We suggest that any reader who does not see this subject clearly should read carefully and prayerfully the 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel.

The Message to the Laodicean stage of the Church pictures the nominal Church of today as our Lord sees her. In one sense she is not cold. She has much zeal, but not according to knowledge. She has organized her armies, developed her machinery and multiplied her stores; but yet the enemy does not fall before her. She claims that her principal object is to convert sinners, to bring forth spiritual children. The Prophet puts these words into the mouth of nominal Christians when they

R5993 : page 348

awake to a knowledge of the situation: "We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the earth fallen." (Isaiah 26:16-18.) This is said after they have realized the presence of the Lord.

We should not look for light where little remains but the fading reflections of a former glory. The sickly hue which now appears is only the smoke illuminated by the piercing rays from the Hand which, high upon the wall, is writing, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." (Daniel 5:25-28.) Unknown to the Laodicean Church, our Lord has returned. He has stood at the door and knocked. Had they been awake, they would have heard. Our Lord clearly foretold that He would come as a thief; but He

did not tell at what hour.

While the nominal church is still seemingly in power, while the old glory still hangs about her, while it is still respectable and honorable to be a church member, the Little Flock of Truth-seekers are despised and rejected. They are covered with reproach because they dare to point out the faults of a worldly church. They are looked down upon by her who sits as a proud queen, lifted up in order that she may have the greater fall.--Revelation 18:7,21.

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R5994 : page 348

SOME ITEMS OF INTEREST

THE WAR OBSESSION

"Does it not strike you that a most dangerous worldwide psychological condition is being created by the war in Europe? War is too rapidly becoming a fixed and normal condition; men and women are becoming too easily adapted to that condition.

"The people of the warring powers, not alone the soldiers, but the stay-at-homes, are accepting death on the firing line as inevitable and as good a way as any to die. The prayers for peace have been superseded by a grim determination on both sides to fight to a finish; to continue the war as the PERMANENT business of the nation. In the meantime crops are being raised almost normal, business is being conducted as usual, and even social functions are being resumed.

"The attitude of Europe is being reflected over here. While still persistently declaring our principles of peace, war in our heart of hearts does not appear near so horrible to us as it did three, two, or one year ago. Are we not being insidiously inoculated with the war germ?

"We may be forced into war, no matter how we struggle against it, but as a decent, Christian people let us not accept it as other than a horrible catastrophe. Without this country to lead in persistent efforts for peace a complaisant mental attitude toward war may soon become chronic all over the world; it is almost so in Europe now." --Cleveland Press.

"WITH THE SKIN OF MY TEETH"

--JOB 19:20.--

The following is a partial synopsis of the description of the teeth-membrane or skin, in "Tomes' Dental Anatomy," 1904, Fourth edition, London. It shows that Job and the learned of his day were far from being monkey-men. Until lately Job's words were considered a joke by dentists as well as others. The Bible is a wonderful book.

"Nasmyth's Membrane"

"Under the names of Nasmyth's Membrane, Enamel, Cuticle, or persistent dental capsule, a structure is described about which much difference of opinion has been, and indeed still is, expressed. Over the enamel of the crown of a human or other mammalian tooth, the crown of which is not coated with a thick layer of cementum, there is an exceedingly thin membrane, the existence of which can only be demonstrated by the use of acids, which cause it to become detached from the surface of the enamel. When thus isolated it is found to form a continuous transparent sheet, upon which, by staining with Nitrate of Silver, a reticulated pattern may be brought out as though it were made of Epithelial cells. It is exceedingly thin, Kolliker attributing it to a thickness of only one twenty-thousandth of an inch; but, nevertheless, it is very indestructible, resisting the action of strong Nitric or Hydrochloric Acid and only swelling slightly when boiled in Caustic Potash."

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page 348

HOLIDAY REMEMBRANCERS

WE ARE publishing early this year, as usual, a list of our stock suitable for Holiday Gifts. This will enable the friends to send their orders in good time to avoid the later congestion of the mail and express service.

Remember that our Gifts should always in some measure represent us as ambassadors of Christ:

"Studies in the Scriptures." India paper edition, fine sealskin binding, gold edges, light, small, beautiful, per set, \$9.80 in cloth carton.

"Studies in the Scriptures." Morocco, over boards, gold edges, but on paper the same as the ordinary cloth edition, suitable for book-shelf, \$6 (1L 5s) for six volumes, postpaid.

"Studies," Volume I., with Pyramid Chapter added. This special edition is very suitable for presentation to uninterested friends. Many have had their interest awakened by the reading of the Pyramid Chapter. A picture of the Great Pyramid is stamped in gilt on the front cover. We recommend this Volume for gift purposes. Postpaid 50c. (2s 1d).

Daily Heavenly Manna. Cloth-bound edition, prepaid, 60c. Prices on "Studies" and Manna to Colporteurs and to I.B.S.A. Classes in lots of 50 or more, charges collect, will be one-half of the above mentioned prepaid rates.

"Poems of Dawn." Nearly three hundred very choice poems topically divided, the very thing each should have near him for a leisure moment. The value of these as spiritual stimulants is inestimable. They can be appreciated by all

Christians, though of course especially by those possessing a knowledge of Present Truth. Postpaid in karatol, red edges, 50c; leather-bound, gold edges, 75c.

"In the Garden of the Lord." This little booklet is a choice poem from the pen of Sister Seibert. It contains sixteen colored illustrations, twenty-four pages. Postpaid 6c. (3rd) each; per dozen 65c. (2s 8d).

Choice Motto Cards for home embellishment and spiritual refreshment:

Packet Ma--Twelve mottoes, small and medium, postpaid 50c.

Number Mb--Fourteen medium and small cards, \$1.

Number Mc--Thirteen large, medium and small cards, \$1.

Number Md--Four large and medium cards, \$1.

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Scripture Memorizing Cards. We have two different sets of these--No. 1 and No. 2. Colors of the cards indicate the topic. For instance, purple represents royalty and the Kingdom, garnet represents the redeeming blood, etc. On one side of the cards are texts appropriate to the color. On the reverse side of the card is the citation of where it is found. These can be used personally or with a company of friends. The design is to commit the text to memory and its citation. Many have found these very useful. Fifty cards to the pack, 25c. (1s 1d) per pack, postpaid.

Write your letters and correct P. O. address very plainly; also give name of nearest express office and company.

Write your orders on a separate sheet of paper from your letter. If answering a letter marked File A, File R, or otherwise, refer to it in the opening paragraph of your letter.

By observing these simple requests, delay will be avoided.

page 349

"I.B.S.A." BIBLES, BIBLE STUDY HELPS, ETC.

First in this list we mention the several volumes of
"STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES" SERIES
[SEE OPPOSITE PAGE]

We commend also, as aids, the following publications (not all our own), which we supply at specially low prices because of the assistance they lend to the study of God's Word. We mention these somewhat in the order in which they seem to us to be desirable aids.

OUR SPECIAL "I.B.S.A." BIBLE

Hereafter to distinguish our own special edition from other Bibles, we will refer to it as the "I.B.S.A." Bible. This Bible is becoming more and more indispensable to all readers as they learn how to use it. The translation, of course, is not at all different from that of other Bibles of the Common Version. We specially recommend

it for its smallness of size, lightness of weight, and good-sized print, and above all for the helps to Bible students and teachers bound with it; printed on India paper; excellent press work. Its special feature, distinguishing this Bible from all others, is

BIBLE TEACHERS' MANUAL.
Part I.

Biblical Comments from Genesis to Revelation with references to the **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** and others of our publications showing the page where the text is more fully discussed and elaborated. We can scarcely imagine anything more helpful than these for Bible study. It is so easy to turn to the reference and ascertain if the matter has been treated and where and how. It represents four hundred and eighty-one pages of matter.

Part II.
INSTRUCTORS' GUIDE TEXTS.

This is a topical arrangement of Bible subjects specially convenient for those who have opportunity for teaching others the Divine Plan of the Ages. Its various Topics are arranged under distinct headings and the various texts bearing upon the subjects are collated. With this help a novice has at his command, well-furnished, "the Sword of the Spirit." It is in condensed form, very convenient, consists of eighteen pages solid matter.

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The Berean Topical Index, alphabetically arranged, presents a large variety of subjects showing references to the **STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES** and others of our publications treating the same. This feature covers twenty-eight pages.

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SPURIOUS PASSAGES NOTED.

In this, specially difficult texts are brought to the attention and references given showing where they are treated in our publications. Following this is a full list of various interpolations and spurious passages of the Scriptures not in the original MSS., as proved by the oldest Greek MSS.--fifteen pages.

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All of our "I.B.S.A." Bibles contain the above, and some of them, the numbers of which end with a nine, contain additionally Bagster's Bible Study Helps, including an alphabetical index of proper names and Bagster's Bible Concordance and Maps--a total of one hundred and eighty-six pages.

We not only supply these Bibles at cost price, but, because of the large quantities ordered at a time, we are enabled to secure a cost price which is really phenomenal. The very low prices must not lead you to think that these are manufactured in any slipshod manner. They are first class in every particular. The prices are, many of them, less than one-half of what you pay for such books almost anywhere else.

So great is the demand for these "I.B.S.A." Bibles that hereafter we purpose carrying no others in stock except pocket Bibles and large type Bibles for the aged. We will still, however, be pleased to serve anyone who desires other Bibles. We can procure for these wholesale rates, usually twenty-five per cent. off, plus postage.

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No. 1918, \$1.85, postage prepaid, is a beautiful book. It is small and light. Size 4 3/4 x 6 3/4 inches. It has minion type, red under gold edges, divinity circuit. French Seal. Looks like the genuine sealskin, but it is in reality good sheepskin.

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No. 1928, price \$2.85, postage prepaid. This is the same book exactly as No. 1918, except that it has genuine morocco binding; leather-lined.

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R5994 : page 350

INTERESTING LETTERS

WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE CHASTENS

MY DEARLY BELOVED PASTOR:--

As is expressed by so many dear friends writing you, we hesitate to intrude upon your consecrated time. We regret that too often during the past fourteen years we have needlessly done so. We now pray that God shall overrule all our mistakes for the good of His cause and our own spiritual advancement.

We are now perplexed over some matters concerning what we should do in the Harvest work, and after praying over the matter, feel directed of the Lord to lay it before you, and abide by what you think best. We will try to be brief.

(1) Reading and accepting Present Truth in 1902, I was very zealous for about one year to hand out tracts and tell the "good tidings." Finding that the people generally did not care to hear it and having a growing family to support, I lost my zeal, became interested in worldly affairs, with the result that after a season of measurable prosperity in which I failed, painfully, to contribute to God's cause as I should, I found myself a bankrupt and in debt in 1912. I accepted the chastisement as of the Lord, returned to my "first love," and was not rejected (what wonderful mercy!), putting my trust in Him for temporal welfare as well as spiritual. He has guided and guarded our interests to the extent that we have been able to provide things needful in an honorable way (farming). Our family of seven children are growing--our oldest, a girl of fifteen years, thoroughly consecrated, and two boys younger than she, thirteen and eleven years respectively, are manifesting a deep interest in God's Word. We are thus enabled to have the Bethel exercises each morning, with lessons from the SCRIPTURE STUDIES and TABERNACLE SHADOWS alternately every evening before retiring. We are at present somewhat isolated, except for one dear brother near us whom the Lord brought into the light through our humble ministry. We have no class connections except our own home. Our questions follow:

(1) Opportunities are presenting themselves for giving public talks in small towns around us, which, when we have accepted them, seem to have stirred up an interest to the extent that the congregation increases and some are giving evidences of full acceptance of the Truth. There are brethren in large Classes who could and would as Elders do this work

at a considerably greater expense than myself, owing to distance, etc. Since I have no Class direction should I call upon those brethren, or do this work myself--especially when going to a small place where we have no assurance of a good turnout?

(2) If I continue to do this service should I report to the Bible House each meeting held, number in attendance, number manifesting interest, etc.?

(3) We note that you advise that only such as are able to answer the late list of questions be considered as eligible to Eldership. We have sent in our answers to these questions, but have not heard as to what grade we made. We are sure since sending them in that we were not quite clear on one or two, at least. We kept a copy of the questions and are making a study of them, and find them very helpful. We also believe this is a timely test directed of God to provide thorough shepherds for His flock, and shall be glad to abide by the outcome of our examination.

(4) Considering the fact that we have lessons each day in the week at home, would it be proper for my family to sacrifice my leadership to other work on Sundays?

Praying every day for you, dear Brother, that you may receive strength, courage and wisdom from above to continue in the way until He shall say, "It is enough," and soliciting an interest in your prayers,

I am sincerely your brother in hope, -----.

OUR REPLY:--We rejoice with you that the Lord did not permit you to drift away from Him, but gave you experiences which directed you, and brought you important lessons.

We quite approve your course of going forth every Sunday, or whenever convenient opportunity may afford, to neighboring villages and towns, to spread the knowledge of God's Word and of the Divine "Plan of the Ages." We are glad that you are thus engaged and that the Lord is granting you to see some fruit from your labors. We would encourage you to go on in the good work, believing that you will not be sacrificing the interests of your home so long as you continue the worship of the Lord and the study of His Word therein. A further suggestion we would make is that you introduce the reading matter to all who manifest any interest. It is our experience that, no matter who does the preaching, nor how much of it is done, very few will be brought to a satisfactory condition of knowledge or of character unless they read for themselves--STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, WATCH TOWER, etc.

Since you are not identified with any Ecclesia, it would not be necessary for you to appeal to any. Authority to preach God's Word goes to whoever receives the Holy Spirit, in proportion as he may have talents for service.

The V. D. M. questions have been sent out freely and many of them have been returned, but we have not yet had time to make an examination of them. Shortly we hope to appoint a Committee to examine all the papers and to pass upon them, and we will then be glad to notify each one in respect to the accuracy of his answers, as viewed by the Committee.

May the Lord's blessing continue with you richly!

TO PREPARE THE WAY

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Loving greetings to my beloved Pastor and Brother in the Lord, through whom the dear children of the Kingdom are constantly fed and nourished with meat in due season from the dear Lord's own table!

Kindly pardon this intrusion upon your great magnanimity, and accept my sincere thanks for all you have been to, and done for, me and mine, by your unceasing labor of love. As the debt is so great, and I so very poor at reciprocity, I pray God, our Father, through His Son, our Redeemer and Lord, to cancel it, making such rewards perpetually as it richly merits. (Phil. 4:19.) His grace is so wonderful and matchless!

Had served many years as a church worker, but eventually sickening at its form of godliness, etc., slipped back into the field (world). About this time I married, and my wife has blessed me with great faithfulness and five children--one asleep.

About this same time a dear friend of ours bought THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES of a Colporteur (Sister Graham) and handed it to my wife for me to read it and give my opinion as to its merit, etc.

At this time my business began to move me to and fro with my little home and increasing family, and the book was laid away. After ten years or so of roaming, sometimes doing well, but never satisfied, I met a dear Brother S-----. A little conversation made me feel he had something I wanted, and somehow I let him know it. He kindly invited me to discuss the matter and after a very few exchanges he quoted, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground," etc. It was with this text I received some light, and surely more light has been the watchword ever since!

I should tell you here that we had been well warned to beware of our friend S-----'s religion, etc., and we had never heard of you, or MILLENNIAL DAWN; in fact, it was only when reading Volume III., after going through Volumes I. and II., that I got to know Pastor Russell and his authorship of the books, etc., the main reason for this, I think, being the fact that the chart and preface of Vol. I. were missing.

Leaving Brother S-----'s that evening, some tracts were given me. When I got home and told my wife where I had been and spent the evening, both hands went up in horror, and the words, "You've done it now; I was always afraid you would! I have no more desire; ah, I have been warned! You'll be an infidel proper now!" etc., etc.

But she was already grieved about my seeming lack of spiritual desire and non-churchianity, and very anxious for the children. Two days or so after this I sat down to take some of the "food," and a paragraph in the tract "Do You Know?" got me; it referred to the trouble, "world-wide, socialistic and anarchistic." I felt very strange and not anxious to take it in. The statement, "The downfall of all the kingdoms of the world" grieved me, but I had not yet noticed the statement, "To prepare the way for Messiah's

Kingdom"--the Heavenly Kingdom.

I did not like to see the disasters predicted, but when the above caught my eye I exclaimed, Thank God, whoever has penned this! Exuberant with this joy, my wife must see it. And as I read, you should have seen her face, "And will result in the downfall of all the kingdoms of the earth." She was troubled and said, "That's awful!" Yes, I said, but thank the Lord this author has something better for their place; listen: "To prepare the way for Messiah's Kingdom."

She did not, however, embrace the Truth with me, but seemed to fight at every step, until she was brought to see plainly it is the Truth and that it is no use to fight the Truth. She was now hopeful, missing my society, and very, very lonely. One day, sitting at her knitting (I was making a few notes), she said, "If you can't speak, write something; it will be all right." Whereupon I wrote, "What do you think of consecration?" and passed it on. She replied, "A great deal." I was delighted. She symbolized shortly after, and our

page 351

life has since been fraught with abundant joy and satisfaction in the dear Lord, to whom be all the praise for evermore!

Being tied by family duties, etc., we have not been able to render very much service in the Harvest work, but we do pray for the dear Lord's blessing continually on you and all "the dear colaborers at the Brooklyn Tabernacle, Bethel, and everywhere."

We ask your loving prayers for us that we may be found faithful and joined with you and all His own to our living, loving Head in His Kingdom, in the sweet bye and bye.

"Toil on, and in thy toil rejoice;
For toil comes rest; for exile, Home;
Soon thou shalt see Him face to face,
And hear Him say, "Enough, well done!"
Your brother in the Lord, T. R. HICKMAN.

ONE USED HIS BRAINS--THE OTHER DID NOT

DEARLY BELOVED PASTOR:--

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I have been wanting to give you my testimony for some time; how I got the Truth, and what it has done for me. I had often heard the saying, "As a man soweth, so shall he also reap," and I was sowing bad thoughts in my heart, and reaping bad habits.

My first start in the Christian life was in the fall of 1914, when I joined the "Knights of Malta." I got out of each Degree just enough of the Bible to make me want to know the rest; so I would go home and get my Bible and read the connections. It got so interesting to me that I started at Genesis and read everything to the end of Revelation. In that way I was getting rid of some of my bad thoughts, for

some good thoughts.

I was a great fellow for condemning the Roman Catholic religion. I was working with a Catholic friend at that time, and I asked him one day why he did not use his own brains instead of believing everything the priests told him. He

R5995 : page 350

asked what church I went to, and I told him that I was a Presbyterian, and he inquired why I was one. I told him, "Because my mother and father were." He asked, "Why don't you use your own brains?" I replied, "That is right; I am going to use them." He was telling all about St. Peter as being the first Pope, etc. So I bought a "Theological Dictionary" which gives the history and belief of all denominations. I asked our Heavenly Father to show me which was the right one. The first that I read was the history and belief of the Presbyterian Church. It did not take me long to find out that I did not believe what they taught. The more I read of the different beliefs the more disgusted I got. I saw your sermons in the Pittsburgh papers, but I did not read them very often, until one day I saw your sermon on, "Peter and the Kingdom Keys," and read it very carefully. I found that you proved from the Scriptures that St. Peter was not the first Pope. It gave me more zeal to read and study your sermons. The one, I believe, that got me into the Truth, was your sermon on "Christ Buried in the Flesh and Raised in the Spirit." I told my wife (who is also with me in the Truth), that I was going to send for a set of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. But our Heavenly Father, seeing that my heart was ready for the Truth, did not give me a chance to send for them. He sent one of His messengers to my home with them. It was April 15th, 1915, and I have been making a close study of them ever since, and I thank my Heavenly Father for calling me "out of darkness into His marvelous light." I rejoice in trials and tribulations, because my love for our Heavenly Father casteth out fear.

My wife and I had the great pleasure of hearing you talk at the Carnegie Hall, Pittsburgh, May 9th, 1915. The first time we attended a meeting in the Auditorium, Pittsburgh, was July 4th, 1915. Brother Kendall gave a talk on the Life of Christ, from Isaiah, 53d chapter. We made up our minds that from that time on we would follow you as you follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

October 10, 1915, I sent nineteen letters which I received from the Brooklyn Tabernacle, to the Elders, Deacons and the Minister of the Presbyterian Church, notifying them why I was withdrawing and asked each one of them to come to my home and we would talk it over. None have come yet. Shortly after, I passed the minister on the street, but he did not recognize me. It was told me that he said he did not want to have anything to do with Pastor Russell or anybody that believed in his teachings.

My wife and I consecrated ourselves to God during the October, 1915, Convention in Pittsburgh, and we symbolized our consecration by water baptism January 2d, 1916. We have

been striving ever since to be overcomers by making the good fight, and guarding "the faith" to the best of our ability. We ask that you remember us in your prayers, that we may be faithful unto the end, when it will be said, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord."

We pray that our Heavenly Father will give you strength and wisdom so that you will be faithful unto death, and also all others who have made a Covenant with Him by sacrifice.

With much Christian love,

BROTHER AND SISTER HEADRICK.--England.

A MINISTERIAL ATTEMPT TO "ANSWER" THE TRUTH

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Since your visit among us I have wondered if you would like to hear the results of our meeting. The effect on the entire city has been wonderful. Many thoughtful men heard you and have not minced matters in their open approbation of your sermon. The local papers did not report it and they came in for some criticism for failing to do so.

On Sunday evening following your meeting two ministers attempted to "answer" you. They resorted to slander and falsehood, blindly wresting your points. Many who heard them after having heard you, have been drawing comparisons that are detrimental to these ministers' hold on their people.

The pastors of one denomination have met to discuss the situation and to decide what to say to their congregations about you and your teachings. They admitted that the question everywhere is getting beyond their ability to answer.

We are continuing our volunteering and canvassing, finding a kind of interest that will not much longer be put off without the Truth.

The opposition is getting strong, but the Lord knows all about that! I thank Him always for this opportunity to serve Him. How kind He was to let me have this Light and His Robe of Righteousness to hide my blemishes as they become more perceptible!

I thank Him for your visit here. It has been a greater blessing than we knew. May our Father bless you and send you back!

In Jesus' Name,

BUEBO ELLER.

BRITISH CONDITIONS GROW SERIOUS

A Brother in Great Britain writes:--

"Women are now taking the places previously occupied by men, in nearly every trade. They are driving and collecting fares on the electric cars, motor cars, etc.; they are to be found at the railway depots emptying the wagons, behind the counters, in the banks, working the machines on the farms, and doing every other conceivable job which men have been in the habit of doing in the past.

"Our nation is being weakened very considerably by the big battles that are now raging at the front. Thousands from this district wiped out daily. It is a common occurrence to meet a mother who has lost all her sons--very often three or four--and in many cases the father also.

"If ever there was a time to preach the Truth it is now. The nation is being broken down, and who can give comfort and joy to these dear hearts, now torn and sad, but ourselves? and we are doing, by the Lord's grace, all we can.

"As a Church here, we are adding to our numbers daily; many very fine and noble characters are amongst those now coming along; and while the Lord continues to bless us, we remember you all. Often we find it easier to walk with the Lord when troubles abound on every side, while it is difficult to maintain our full devotion to the Lord when everything goes smoothly."

CAREFULLY STUDIED VOW--THEN ACCEPTED IT

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:--

Soon after reading your views in the November 1 issue of THE WATCH TOWER I sat down to inform you, out of my own experience, what reasons a consecrated believer could have for not taking the Vow. After stating my reasons I decided to change the letter by leaving out one of them, so I re-wrote the letter, but decided to wait awhile before sending it in its final form. The result is, that after having carefully studied the Vow and my own heart, I have made the Vow my own, and thank God for it.

I wonder if there are not others who would be led to take the Vow, if they should very carefully scrutinize their reasons for not taking it? Please record me as a keeper of the Vow and accept my deepest gratitude for having brought me to a closer study of my heart.

May God's blessing continue with you in the work!

Yours in His name, M. E. S.--N. C.

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