

The Bible Standard

“Send out your light and truth! Let them lead me;...”

Psalm 43:3

“LIFT UP A STANDARD FOR THE PEOPLE”

Isaiah 62: 10

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“ARE YOU HE THAT TROUBLES ISRAEL?”

These were the words of Ahab, king of Israel, to Elijah. Ahab, it will be remembered, was the husband of Jezebel, the wicked woman, who persecuted Elijah, and from whom he fled into the wilderness for three and a half years (1 Kings 18: 17).

We have before seen that all three of these Jewish characters were types or figures of classes in the Gospel age, and that their actions were such as to illustrate the actions of those classes which they represented: Elijah represented the Church—the true and earnest teachers of God’s Word; Jezebel is used to represent Papacy, the false church, which came into power by marriage with the Roman Empire, which is represented by Ahab.

As Papacy used the Roman power and the inquisition power to persecute the true teachers of the Lord (and slew many) for three and a half symbolic years, or twelve hundred and sixty symbolic days [1260 literal years]; so Jezebel used Ahab’s power to persecute Elijah and slay the Lord’s prophets for three and a half years. During those years there was great drought in the land; so, too, during the 1260 years of Papal persecution, ending in 1799, there was a great spiritual drought and “a famine, not of bread nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord” (Amos 8: 11). Then the false teachers of Baal, (Papacy), being refuted, an abundant shower has come; Jehovah is again

recognized. But Jezebel and her daughters hated the Elijah class and sought their destruction.

It is about this time that Ahab said to Elijah: “Are you he that troubles Israel?” Elijah troubled them because he was a true prophet and opposed their sins; so too with those now who remain true to God, who will not bow to the forms and customs of this perverse age, but rather reprove them. Sorely vexed by these reproofs, those at ease in Zion use almost the words of Ahab

to Elijah: “Are you he that troubles Israel?”

Yes, we would trouble Israel. God has said: “He that has my word let him speak my word.” “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet and show my people their transgressions, yet they seek me daily and delight to know my ways as a nation that did righteousness and forsook not the ordinances of their God.” This was applicable to fleshly Israel (the “shadow”) and to the nominal Gospel church as well. There never was a time in which the Jewish laws and ordinances were more faithfully observed than during the seven years of their “harvest.”



Elijah Rebukes Ahab
“Are you he that troubles Israel?”

Every form and ceremony and tithe was scrupulously remembered. The Temple just finished by Herod was the grandest in which they had ever worshiped. Their religious system was gaining a worldwide reputation. Missionary enterprises were on foot for Judaizing the world, and so zealous were they that Jesus said of them,

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“You compass sea and land to make one proselyte.” Yet of all this grand display—zeal, pomp, and seeming success—he said, “This people draws nigh unto me with their mouth and honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me” (Matt. 15: 8). Of their religious observances Jesus said: “You make clean the outside—like whited walls and sepulchers clean and beautiful outside, but full of decay and corruption within.”

The false church, of that age and that “harvest” were but the shadows of this age, church, and harvest. As then, so now, prosperity and seemingly great success attends both at home and abroad the church’s efforts. Magnificent temples of worship, grand music and costly apparel, seem to stamp the present time as one of unparalleled success; yet now as then, it is mostly on the outside that the beauty is seen, for inwardly the church seems daily to become more corrupt and worldly. “Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away” (2 Tim. 3: 1-5).

Jesus said the converts to Judaism were really injured by being brought into that corrupted church. We believe that the same thing is true here since the degeneracy of the nominal Gospel church. The man of the world is injured more than benefited. While of the world he was open to conviction of sin, but the church has said to him: You are a moral man, and not a sinner; if you have any secret vices let them go, and come join our church.

Zion is at ease and self-satisfied, and when we cry aloud and spare not, but show God’s people their sins and their forms of godliness without the power thereof, they become enraged and complain that we are troubling Israel. When this same charge was made against Jesus, our head—that he was opposing and hindering the God-appointed leaders and teachers, the Chief Priests, Scribes and Pharisees, he said: “Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword [Truth is a sword]. For I came to set . . . at variance . . . and a man’s foes shall

be they of his own household—and he that does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me” (Matt. 10: 34-36).

Truth never has led the majority during this time when evil is permitted to reign. A large part of its work has always been, and always will be, to reprove darkness. Reproof is never pleasant, but is especially unpleasant to those who most need it. Of the saints it is written: “Great peace have they that love your law, and nothing shall offend them.” It was because he reproved sin and error that Elijah was hated and was accused of causing Israel’s trouble; for the same reason Jesus was denounced, and for the same reason all, who will live Godly, are similarly offensive.



Jesus Weeping over Jerusalem

Luke 19: 41

If any man will reprove, let him speak as an oracle of God, and let nothing be done or said through bitterness, strife, or vain glory; but let him by a meek and quiet spirit show forth in love the power, as well as the form of Godliness to the praise of Him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Jesus in his day called the attention of the Jews to the judgments of God about to come upon them, saying:

“These be days of vengeance that all things written should be fulfilled” (Luke 21: 22). Elijah gave warning of the death of Jezebel and Ahab, that dogs should lick his blood and eat her flesh. So here it becomes our place to speak the word of God as declared by him, that Ahab and his successors (the Roman and succeeding empires) shall be slain—destroyed (Dan. 2: 44). Also, that Jezebel shall be “eaten by dogs” (degraded), i.e. Papacy, and in fact the nominal church, as it represents

the same church and world-united system, shall be cast down and consumed.

Elijah further represents the “little flock” of glorified ones, by being highly exalted, caught up in heavenly glory. Oh, what a blessedness it has been to recognize that little company, who have now been changed to their Divine nature in the perfect likeness of our Lord and Head for the future judging and ruling in the Millennial earthly Kingdom (Luke 12: 32)!

SPECIAL MEETING FOR MINISTERS, ELDERS AND DEACONS

Pastor Russell's Exhortation

Convention Report Sermons, pp. 122-125, 1910.

This article should be read in the light and context of the time that it was written.

DEAR BRETHREN: I am very glad to meet with you this morning—the pilgrims, strangers, foreigners, respecting this world, the elders and deacons in the Church of Christ, of all denominations, irrespective of denominational lines. I thought I should like to have a little talk with you, because it seems to me that, in the first place, there is a great work devolving upon you—a great responsibility in connection with the Lord's harvest work. And, in the second place, because I believe that those who occupy any place of service in the Lord's household have correspondingly heavy temptations and trials, and every one of us ought to feel the responsibility of the position and the dangers to our own feet. You know it is very easy for us to think about other people, and other people falling, and other people slipping, and other people sliding, but it is a very important matter, I think, to bring it right home to ourselves. When, in looking over the general interests of the Lord's work, I have seen those who are in danger, and those who are slipping and sliding, I have observed for years that a large proportion of them are those who have had influential places in the Church of Christ—important positions of service in the Lord's congregation—and I feel that the Apostle's words are fully substantiated when he said, “Do not many of you become teachers,

my brethren, knowing that we shall receive a severer judgment.” So while it is a very honorable thing to be a servant in the Lord's Body, it carries with it a very weighty responsibility and danger, lest, after preaching to others, we ourselves should be castaways. In my own personal experience, dear friends—and I expect to say nothing to you I do not feel for myself—I have had this heavily upon my heart and mind for several years. I have noted some of those who slipped away from the truth, and have said to myself, some of these people have good intellects, some of them at least, see matters very clearly, and if they could see clearly at one time and, apparently, be very intelligent in the truth, and then to lose it and have it all become blind to them, might not I, similarly, fall away from the position of favor and knowledge of truth, also? And my heart answered, “Yes,” and I said to the Lord, “Lord keep me, hold me in your powerful hand.”

While we are not to attempt to pass judgment on anybody and say, “You are thus, and you are so, and you have too much of this, and too little of that,” yet we cannot be oblivious to some conditions now, and after one has fallen away, it is not improper at least to say, “On what did he slip?” At the time it might be improper for us to judge that anyone was slipping, or that he was

in a wrong condition of heart, because we are not able to judge the heart; but after one has slipped, then I think it is right and proper that we should look to see on what did that person slip.

I remember as a boy passing along a street of Pittsburgh, one evening, after the snow had fallen, I walked over one of those old, smooth, iron cellar doors when it was covered with a thin shimmer of snow. Just as I stepped upon it I went down that quick (snapping finger). And just as I fell I thought of the Scripture that says, "Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." I think I had hardly touched the cellar-door when I had that all through my head. I do not know that I had any haughty spirit in connection with that fall, but I concluded that I could learn a good lesson from that. I have watched, and my experience is that there are slippery places along the spiritual pathway, and when we are carelessly walking along, thinking about something else, and not minding our conduct, not watching where we are stepping, is the time when we are likely to go down quickly. And the thing, so far as my judgment, it enables me to determine, what has proven the most disastrous to those who have fallen, has been a spirit of pride and selfishness. You know what I mean. I think it is often well for us to be so much on guard on that subject that if we find any feeling creeping up at any time of any disposition to sit down on anybody, we

had better inquire of ourselves, Why am I wishing to correct that brother? Is it simply because it is necessary and proper at this time, or would another time that is not observable by others be more appropriate? Do I consider myself to be superior in the knowledge of the truth than others and do I think that I need to act as the clearing-house for every Bible presentation in the class? Is it some feeling of pride that I have? Whatever matter presents itself, we need to keep close watch upon ourselves, upon our own hearts. Of course, we want to keep watch upon our speech and upon all the conduct of life, but especially upon our hearts. What is the motive? Why did I say that? Why did I do that? What was the motive behind such an action? Was I trying to correct the brother and show to all present, how much better I understand the truth than the visiting pilgrim or sister? If we criticize ourselves, we are doing what the Apostle Paul meant when he said, "See then that you walk circumspectly." To walk circumspectly means to look all around to see where you step. And so you and I, dear brethren, in proportion as we have service to do for the great King, realize that our Adversary, the Devil, goes about seeking whom he may entrap, and ensnare, and stumble, and that in like proportion he gives special attention to us. I am confident he gives me plenty of attention. Of course, we are glad on the other hand that the Lord also is giving us His attention. Whoever



**And my heart answered, "Yes," and I said to the Lord,
"Lord keep me, hold me in your powerful hand."**

is specially beset by the Adversary, the Lord, we may be sure, is also especially caring for, if we are His and loyal at heart. “The angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear him and delivers them.”

It would not be my thought to inculcate a spirit of slavish fear, but a spirit of great reverence for God, and an intense feeling that we are in the most important work and that we are simply there as God’s servants, and the servants of the congregation, and it behooves us to do all in our power to serve the flock of Christ and not to do so from any selfish motive, any spirit of vaunting self, or puffing up self, or exalting self before the brethren, but simply, How can I best serve the Lord, and those who are His? And where that spirit is within, I believe there is safety, and if there be any other spirit, if you find yourself looking out for recognition or a position, I believe you will find you are in a dangerous place and should pray God for your deliverance.

I am not the only one who has observed this. Some dear brethren have written to me along the same line. I think of several pilgrim brethren who wrote me, saying, “Dear Brother, I wish you could put something in the magazine that would serve to help save and protect us pilgrims. When we go places, the dear friends make so much of us that I feel,” as one writer said, “I sometimes almost feel my head swelling, and you know that is a dangerous feeling.” It is; he is right. It is well that the Lord’s people everywhere should exercise proper judgment, and not speak in too laudatory terms of any servant of the truth, but speak, on the other hand, in as laudatory terms as you please about the truth itself and about the Great One who gave us the truth—the Lord. But do not puff up anybody beyond common sense, because of their natural ability. There may be some that could stand it, and others who could not stand it, and you and I would be very sorry if we should find ourselves responsible ultimately for having helped to stumble some brother or sister in that way. The very fact they mention this, you see, shows that others beside

myself have felt the importance of the situation and the responsibility of the position.

As I was thinking about this little address this evening, a certain text of Scripture came into my mind, the language of the Apostle Paul when he called together the elders of Ephesus, when he was on his way to Jerusalem, and had not time to go beyond. The elders came out to meet him near the ship, and when they were together he said, as the mouthpiece of the Lord Jesus, “Take heed, therefore, to yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20: 28). Mark the way the Apostle states it—“Take heed to yourselves.” That comes in first, my dear brethren, with all of us. God sees it to be more important to you what you shall do for yourself than what you shall do for anybody else, and God sees it to be so with me, and that I must be more particular respecting myself than respecting anybody else, no matter who. It is well I should feel the responsibility of being a

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(Acts 20: 28).

servant of the Lord and a mouthpiece and ambassador, and it is well that you should feel your responsibility in whatever you shall say and in all you shall do and in all your conduct, remembering the influence this will have on others, either for good or for evil, but it is still more important for yourself. God says that this matter should begin with you, in your own heart, and with me in my own heart. “Take heed to yourselves.” That means, dear friends, a very careful watch, a watch of our motives, a watch of all we do—strict heed—not merely that you took heed last year and took an inventory and saw then just the condition of your heart and found it all right. I have found in my experience it is important for

the Lord's people, especially for those who are in any prominent place, to take inventory of their condition every night. How are you tonight, before you go to bed? What is your heart's condition? How near are you to the Lord? Have you any spots upon your garments, any wrinkles upon your character? If so, get rid of these. There is only the one way. He who does not keep clear of the spots he gets and does not get rid of the wrinkles he has, is not in any condition to teach the flock of God anything on the subject. This matter begins with us, dear friends, "Take heed to yourselves."

Then, secondly, you will be in the proper condition to take heed of the flock of God, which God has purchased with the blood of His own Son. How much heed does the flock need? They need all of your imperfect powers and all of my imperfect powers. It is a wonderful privilege to be ambassadors for God, as though God was speaking, as though we were His mouthpieces. Oh, if we could only feel this morning as we sit here, and feel it every day, that it is not a plume or a medal, or something to be displayed, but it is a



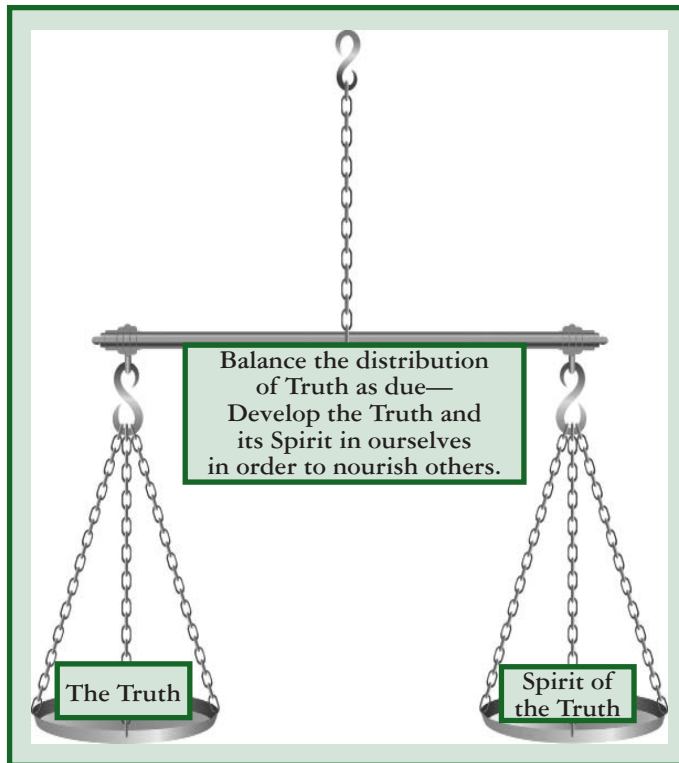
Focus on what the Lord wants of us . . . clear our spots . . . get rid of the wrinkles—be pure in heart.

responsibility that we must give an account of! If you have large privileges, you have also large responsibilities. If the Church of Christ has given you a position, then you owe it to God to consider, as the Apostle said, that the Holy Spirit has made you an overseer—not merely that the flock of God has made you an overseer, not

merely have they voted for you to be the elder or deacon in the congregation, but that God has been behind this matter, and that the whole arrangement is of Him. It is that you are to recognize and feel the responsibility, not merely to those brethren who chose you, but also that God was behind the whole arrangement and that they were acting according to design and arrangement in electing you, and that you in accepting the election were responding not merely to their votes as the votes of so many brethren in Christ, but because you understand that the Holy Spirit was acting and moving according to the directions of the Word of God through those brethren who voted, and that your responsibility, therefore, is a double one: that as having accepted their votes and as having accepted the service which they tendered, and to God as recognizing that all the affairs of the Lord's people are under Divine supervision. As the Apostle puts it, God has set in the body the various members as it pleases him, and if we are not faithful to the setting, He is very able to unset and to bring a different arrangement. It is for us, therefore, to be very careful to feel fully and strongly this responsibility to God for His people over which the Holy Spirit has made us overseers.

The Apostle goes on to say that the Holy Spirit made us overseers for certain purposes—with a certain object in view. What was that object? Was the object of the Holy Spirit in making us overseers of the flock that we might entertain the world? No. That we should feed the world? No. That we should tickle the ears of the brethren? No. That we should show off ourselves, and flash? No. What was the object of the Holy Spirit in making us overseers? The answer of the Apostle is that the Holy Spirit made us overseers that we might feed the flock. What is it to feed the flock? It is to give them the meat in due season, to give the nourishment. We must have developed ourselves in the truth and its spirit that we are able to distribute the truth as it is due. Now, there are some who have a feeling that they must give the flock that kind of food which would glorify

the giver most, and unless they can find some way of glorifying themselves in connection with it they are not going to feed anybody. That is all wrong. We all know that is wrong. They know that is wrong. They have not thought upon the responsibility of their position. The proper attitude, dear brethren, I am sure you will agree with me, is this: God wishes His flock to be fed; He has given you and me the opportunity of service in that direction; He expects us to lay aside self entirely and to devote ourselves with every energy to do all we can to feed His people, ignoring self. Never mind whether they have any respect for you or not; never mind whether they glorify you or not; go in and feed the flock—let the other matter take care of itself. But my opinion is that the brethren will ultimately know whether you have been feeding them or not, and the flock ultimately will appreciate you as a true servant. They will not appreciate you as lord and master and as a king over them, and you should not wish to be so appreciated. The proper attitude for all the Lord's people is to be glad to



be privileged to be servants of Him, and, as Jesus said, “he that is greatest amongst you,” he whom you should esteem the most highly, who was it to be? The one who puffs himself up? Who was it to be? It is the one who serves the truth as due—the one who most thoroughly lays down his life in the service of the Lord's cause. Now that is the lesson the great Teacher Himself gave to you and to me, that if we would be pleasing to Him, we should not care whether we are pleasing to any one else or not. Of course, we should all like to be pleasing to everybody and especially to Gods people; that is proper enough. We should fix first in our own hearts

and in our own minds that we should be pleasing to our Heavenly Father and to our Lord Jesus. If we find that we are pleasing to Them, no matter what else may happen, we have every reason to be thoroughly satisfied with the result. Is not that what we all agree to? I am sure it is.

The special exhortation I wish to give is, that we forget self entirely, except to see that self is hard at work, that the “old man” is thoroughly bending his back to help the Christian in all the work that his New Heart and Will is engaged in; that you are working him

for all he is worth—making a regular slave of him if you please—your old man, the natural man, the human body. I do not suppose there is any danger of anybody here going away and telling a story to the effect that they did not like the speaker because he spoke so disrespectfully of his father when he mentioned the “old man.” We have the thought that our old man is the old imperfect nature, and that, as the Apostle tells us, you remember, the old nature has been given to us as Christians

to be our servant, and whereas some of us formerly lent our powers to sin and wrong-doing, so now, as consecrated servants, we are to take these bodies and use them for every kind of righteousness, that we may glorify God in our bodies as well as in our spirit which are His (Rom. 12: 1).

So then I hope I make clear and that it enters into all our hearts, the very great responsibility of being representatives, serving the Lord's people. **(These principles still apply today for us, the Bible Standard Ministries—LHMM).** We are appointed to a service

and not to lordship, and, secondly, appointed of the Lord to be His servants to feed the Lord's sheep. We will honor our Lord and please Him best to whatever extent we forget self and engage most thoroughly in the service of the truth. So that if the thought ever comes before your minds—as it may, or might—if I do this it will not glorify me, if I do that it would glorify me, you are to put such a thought entirely from you as being disloyal and unworthy of yourself as a servant with Christ. The whole thing you and I must have in mind in respect to our service is, what will please our Master whom we serve and whom we expect to join with in His Kingdom, if found faithful. If we seek to serve ourselves, then be assured that we will not be pleasing to Him, and that we will fail of the earthly or heavenly phase of the Kingdom. We may be sure—I am certain you will assent to this—that the Lord will not have a single one in the Kingdom class who is self-seeking and selfish; that is contrary to the spirit of our Master. The Apostle tells us that God foreknew and foreordained those who are now elected to the spiritual phase of the Kingdom and will be the Judges and overseers of the

Glorify our Master whom we serve—not ourselves

earthly Millennial Kingdom. The election of those were made copies of His Son and therefore, all the Little Flock are now with the Lord and will be ruling members with Christ during His Millennial reign. We must be copies in this particular sense that He was servant of all; and to the extent that you and I can be servants of all, or servants of a few, as the case may be, we should be glad of the opportunity.

Now, another line of thought, if you please: When I use the word “preach” do not understand me to mean merely to orate as in a discourse or sermon. We are preaching in the sense of teaching. All public speaking is in the nature of preaching or giving forth the message, whether it be in holding Berean classes, or whatever

When we preach—we teach!

other way; it is a preaching or sending forth the message of the Lord. I suggest to you, dear friends, that the thing we are to preach, the message we are to deliver, is a very important one, and that the Adversary would like very much to get our minds diverted from it. Some he might tempt to go off on to some side issue that is new, so that the class might think they were getting new light other than the Gospel. I do not think you want any new light. I do not think the Lord wants any new light. I do not think there is any new light for us outside of Christ, my dear friends. Our great light was started eighteen hundred years ago. The difficulty with us has been that that light has become obscured by the traditions of the elders, and we are trying to get the globe washed clean so the light can shine out. We are trying to get things so that the great truths that Jesus and the Apostles enunciated are understood clearly by ourselves and all the people of God over which He has made us overseers. We should avoid anything like trying to manufacture some new light, dangerous to ourselves and dangerous to the flock. Is there not plenty in the Gospel Jesus preached? Is there not plenty in the Gospel the Apostles preached? How much more do we want, I would like to know? I do not think, my dear friends, that it is necessary for you and me to turn into being manufacturers of new light, and I think there is a danger in that direction; therefore I am seeking to guard you. I believe that the message of the Lord Jesus, the message that the angels announced, is the message that the world needs to understand—the great love of God, and the great love of the Lord Jesus Christ, and how He died, the just for the unjust, and the class He is now calling, and how we must make our calling and election sure, and how the ransom that Jesus provided is the foundation for the entire scheme of salvation, that the death of Jesus is the foundation upon which every feature of Divine grace is built. Then all the philosophy connected with that can very well come

in; it is all connected; but ransom, restitution, sacrifice, and the Divine nature—these are the fundamentals of the Gospel of Christ, so far as I can see. These are the things that Jesus and the Apostles taught and that they set us an example respecting. I believe your course will be the most pleasing to God, and the most successful with His people in bringing them into harmony with the Lord and blessing them with the richness of His spirit, in proportion as you keep very close to the Master and to those twelve stars whom God appointed to be the circle, the crown, of the Church, as pictured in the 12th chapter of Revelation.

Another thing: Some of the dear brethren seem to find as much about a particular brother in the Bible as they find about the Lord Jesus, and I think that is a great mistake. I do not find it there. Some of them say that I am blinded on that subject, that they all can see better



than I can. Perhaps they can, I do not know, but I think, dear friends, that there is a danger in that direction, and I would like to put you all on guard. I think it is the Lord's will that we should recognize every agency God uses, but we are not to recognize any agency of God as being in any competition whatever with the Lord or with His Divine arrangement. He is the fountain of blessing; He only is most to be praised. I think that is the right sentiment. I believe you all agree with that. And yet I think there is a danger of some dear friends preaching this brother or that brother. These brothers would like for you not to do so. They think it would not be to the glory of God. Let me repeat, then, dear friends, that in

my opinion we have so much of the Gospel of God, so much of His plan to study, so many opportunities of showing forth His praises, that we should employ all our time in that way. My advice, therefore, is that we give very little attention to anything outside of that. The Scriptures do indeed say that we may render honor to him to whom honor is due, and that is applicable to anybody and everybody; as, for instance, we look back and we see Martin Luther, and he did a grand work, and we thank God for him; and we might say the same of John Wesley, and very truthfully; I am glad in God's providence he lived, and that he was a faithful man. And there were others of the Lord's people in the past. Let us be glad and rejoice in every one, and be thankful to God. He has used various agencies in helping us, and in helping others, and in bringing forward His great cause; but let us not go into anything that would be at all like man-worship, for I am sure that would be displeasing to the Lord and injurious to ourselves. I remind you again of the Scripture in Revelation where the Church is pictured, which we called to your attention in the past. John, the revelator, who was seeing these things, fell down to worship the angel who showed them to him, and the angel said, "See you do it not; worship God; I am your fellow-servant." And so, dear friends, if our Heavenly Father and our Heavenly Lord have used brothers in any measure they are very glad and very thankful to be used. If the Lord is pleased to use them anymore, they will be glad to be used down to their last breath, but they do not want any worship, they do not want any undue adoration, they do not want any praise. They are glad to have the love of all those who are brethren of the Lord and to be considered a fellow-servant with all, striving to bring to pass all the glorious things that God has promised, striving to tell the good tidings of great joy to as many as the Lord, our God, shall call.

"We are trying to get things so that the great truths that Jesus and the Apostles enunciated are understood . . . he has made us overseers"

JOB'S EXPERIENCES— TYPICAL OF HUMAN HISTORY

“All these things happened unto them for examples [margin, types], and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come” (1 Corinthians 10: 11).

THE Book of Job is credited with being the finest piece of literature in the Hebrew language. It is a poem. All scholars admit that no translation yet given does it justice. Martin Luther, after reviewing his last effort to translate it into German, said, “Job is suffering more from my version than from the taunts of his friends, and would prefer his dunghill to my translation of his lamentation.” The Book of Job “is admitted, with hardly a dissenting voice, to be the most sublime religious poem in the literature of the world,” said Samuel Cox. “I call that one of the grandest things ever written with pen,” . . . There is nothing written, in the Bible nor out of it, of equal literary merit,” said Thomas Carlyle.

Whoever was used of God as the penman, his name is not given. The book is introduced with a prose narrative of Job's losses and sufferings. (The account of Satan's conversation with God concerning Job should be considered as allegorical, after the style of Pilgrim's Progress.) Then his patient endurance is set forth. Next follow the poetic colloquies between Job and his three friends, then Elihu's argument, then the Almighty's address, then Job's confession. The conclusion, relating to Job's return to favor and blessing, and his death, is in prose.

Some have assumed that the Book of Job is merely a parable; and that Job himself is merely an imaginary character. But if this were the case, the teachings of the book would not be different. However, we see no cause to doubt that such a person did live and pass through the experiences related. In Ezekiel 14: 14 and James 5: 11, Job is classed with other holy men, which would not be the case were this narrative merely a parable. Besides, there are particular details given, such as are not common to parables.



Job well respected – Job 1: 8

The fact that Job lived a hundred and forty years after his adversities, or probably over two hundred years in all, together with the fact that neither he nor his friends make any allusion to Israel or Moses or the Law, nor to Abraham and God's Covenant made with him, seems to indicate beyond doubt that he belonged to the Patriarchal Age. Possibly he lived about the same time as Abraham. His home was evidently in Arabia, and probably not far from Palestine. Job is introduced as a man of great learning and influence; as a man of great piety, who knew and revered God and appreciated justice; as a man of great generosity, who considered the widow and the orphan; and as a merchant prince of great wealth, who by his numerous servants and three thousand camels, carried on an extended and very prosperous traffic. Suddenly disaster came upon him and he was bereft of his children, his wealth, his influence and his health. He sought in vain for an explanation as to why God should permit such

evils to befall him. Yet still he trusted in God, saying, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him!” His wife urged that it had been without Divine appreciation that he had sought to do justice and mercy all his life, and exclaimed, “Curse God and die!”

His three friends came to visit him, and, taking much the same view, told him in lengthy argument that he must have been a great sinner and a hypocrite. But, conscious of his own heart-honesty toward God, Job defends himself and goes to too great an extreme in declaring his innocence, but silences his critics. He seems to realize his need of someone to represent his cause before the Lord. He cries out that he is as righteous as he knows how to be; that he cannot reason the matter with God, being so much beneath Him in knowledge and power. He declares that the willfully wicked are not so troubled, while he who has pursued righteousness is so afflicted that life has no further pleasure and he wishes that he had never been born (Chapters 9, 10 and 16). Feeling his own insufficiency to state his case before the great Jehovah, he desires a mediator between God and

himself (Chapters 9: 33; 16: 21).

Job’s masterly reply to the false reasoning of his friends (which many improperly quote as inspired), and his expressions of confidence in God and of his ultimate deliverance, are clearly presented (Chapter 13: 1-16). Then, with prophetic wisdom, in Chapter 14, he presents a most wonderful statement of the course of God’s dealing with mankind.

THE PROBLEM OF THE AGES

The question which perplexed Job and confused his reasonings was the same that for centuries has confused others of God’s people; namely, Why does God permit evil, calamities, afflictions, etc., to come upon His faithful servants? and why are the wicked permitted to flourish? But not until the Gospel Dispensation was it possible for any to know the mind of God on this subject; for it is one of the deep things which could be revealed only by the Spirit of God, and only to those begotten of that Spirit, as St. Paul explains (1 Corinthians 2: 9-14). The Holy Spirit was not given, as a guide and teacher, until after Christ had redeemed us and ascended up on high, there to present His sacrifice as the price of our return to Divine favor, peace and communion.

Although many are still in the dark on this subject, it is now open and clear to all the earnest ones to whom “it is granted to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven,” to understand “the deep things of God” (Matthew 13: 11; 1 Corinthians 2: 10). These see that the reign of evil, the reign of Sin and Death, under Satan, the Prince of this world, is permitted for two reasons: first, that all men may gain a full experience of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the bitterness of its legitimate fruit; and, second, that God’s people may be fully tried and tested as to their loyalty to God in the shadow of affliction and trial, as well as in the sunshine of health and prosperity.

While God did not directly cause the evil state of things which surrounds us in nature and among men, but let it come upon men as the legitimate result, or



Job praying with friends – Job 6: 29

fruit, of disobedience, sin, yet He does make use of the wrath of man and the sins of men and the animosity of Satan to work out grand designs which they do not comprehend, and of which His children know only by faith in His Word of revelation. For instance, how little did Satan and those malicious Jewish priests and Pharisees and those heartless Roman soldiers know that they were assisting in the working out of the Divine Plan when insulting, mocking and crucifying the Lamb of God!

And so it is with the many afflictions of God's people today. Trials are designed to fit and polish us for the greater usefulness and honor in the future developments of God's great Plan. Regardless of the willfulness or the ignorance of the persecutors, these trials of faith and patience are working out for such a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." This they do by cultivating patience, experience, brotherly sympathy and love—which is God-likeness. We should rejoice in tribulation and realize that all things, bad as well as good, unfavorable, as well as favorable—will be overruled in God's providence for their ultimate benefit.

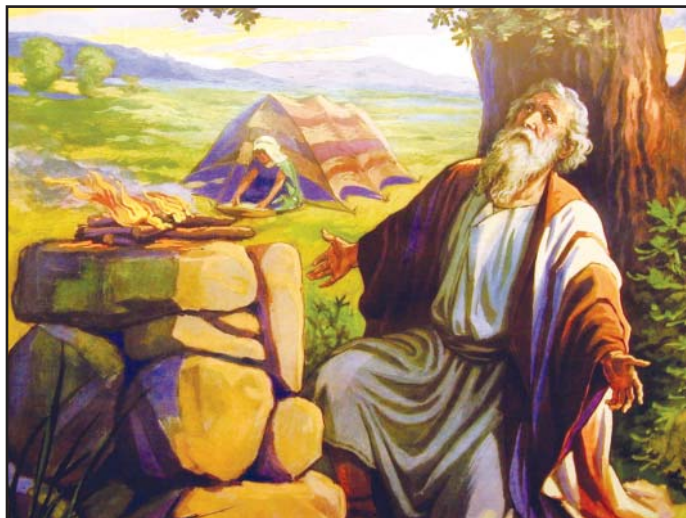
JOB'S HOPE OF A RESURRECTION

But, returning to our consideration of Job, let us note in Chapter 14 some of his prophetic wisdom. The first four verses graphically picture what all, of experience, realize—that human life, under present conditions is full of trial and sorrow, from the cradle to the tomb. And Job shows that he realizes that as a son of fallen parentage he could not be perfect, free from sin, clean, in the full sense of the word.

In verses 5, 6, he tells the Lord that he recognizes the fact that the authority and power to limit man's days are in His hands, but urges, not seeing the ministry of trouble, Why not let me and all men live out our short time in peace, even as we would not afflict a hireling who already has a heavy, burdensome task!

Verses 7-10 are close reasonings respecting the utter hopelessness of man in death, so far as any powers of

his own are concerned. A tree may die and yet its root retains life, which, under favorable conditions, may spring up into another tree. But when man dies there is no root left, no spark of life remains. He gives up the spirit of life, and where is he?



Job offering a sacrifice – Job 1: 5

Having confessed that there is no ground for hope inherent in man, Job begins to express the only, the real hope of our race—a resurrection—see verses 12, 13. Man lies down in death and loses all power to arouse himself, nor can he be resuscitated from the sleep of death by any one, until God's due time. This will be the Resurrection Morning, the Millennial Day, when the present symbolic heavens shall have passed away, and the new heavens or new spiritual ruling power—Christ's Kingdom—shall have come into control of the world. In this Job fully agrees with the teachings of our Lord and the Apostles.

The more he thinks of that blessed time when evil shall no more have dominion, but when a King shall reign in righteousness and princes shall execute judgment, the more he wishes he might die and be at rest. He exclaims (verse 13), "Oh, that You would hide me in the grave [sheol]; that You would keep me secret [hidden] until Your wrath be past; that You would appoint me a set time and remember me!" Job had faith in a resurrection, else he would never have uttered this prayer for death—

for hiding in the grave. But he preferred death, and desired to sleep (verse 12) until the morning, for one reason only—that he might have no further experience with sin and with God’s wrath—evil.

A short period in the end of the Gospel Age is specially called “the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,” because it will be “A time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” Yet the entire period from the time Adam fell is called a time of Divine wrath, and properly so; for in all this long period “the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness,” in a variety of ways. While Love is a controlling principle in the Divine Government, it can operate only in harmony with Justice and Wisdom. It was both just and wise to let man feel the real weight of condemnation to death incurred by willful transgression, in order that when Love should in due

time provide a Ransom and a Resurrection, the culprit might the more gladly avail himself of the provided favors of Restitution and everlasting life. So death and all the evils permitted to come upon the sinful race are manifestations of God’s wrath, which will be yet further shown in the great Time of Trouble (Romans 1: 18). This will be followed by full and clear manifestations of God’s Love and favor in Christ and the glorified Church during the Millennial Age.

In verses 14 and 15, he puts the question pointedly, as though to determine and settle his faith; but he immediately answers affirmatively: “Thou shall call, and I will answer You and awake out of the sleep of Adamic death (John 5: 28, 29); You will have a desire to the work of Your hands”—for His people are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2: 10).
To Be Continued Jan/Feb 2013, BS #874

Moments of Inspiration

We hear cliches and quotes all the time but never really think of the truth embedded in them. Sometimes we have to look closer and read between the lines to see the real meaning of words. Stop and think the next time you hear one of these sayings:

All things come to those who wait

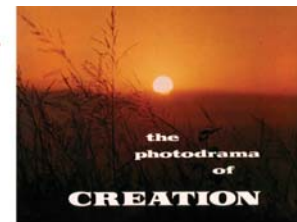


Isaiah 40: 31—*But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint*

Seize the Day



Exodus 32: 29—*For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day*



THE TYPICAL TABERNACLE

God foreknew the Israelites would be unable to fulfill the Law Covenant, and although He gave minute instructions respecting the Tabernacle, and the sacrifices to be offered therein, yet it was only for the lessons it would convey to us. The Tabernacle, in its Court, Holy and Most Holy, in its furniture, priests and sacrifices, illustrated the most important features of the Divine Plan.

St. Paul informs us that the bullock of the sin-offering on the Day of Atonement typified Jesus in the flesh. The killing of the bullock represented the sacrifice of Jesus, begun at His baptism. In His sacrificing, Jesus was also the antitypical High Priest. The offering of incense on the Golden Altar represented Jesus' heart endeavors in doing the Father's will.

Carrying the blood into the Holy represented the consecration of the antitypical priest, the veil thus symbolizing the death of his will, because of which he is accepted as a New Creature. The High Priest passing under the second veil typified The Man Christ Jesus pouring out His soul on Calvary, laying down in death the body which God prepared Him.

The High Priest sprinkling the Mercy-Seat typified Jesus, in Heaven itself, offering to Justice, first His own sacrifice, and then His Church's sacrifice. Nothing could be done with the blood of the Goat (the Church) till the blood of the Bullock (Christ Jesus) had made it holy and acceptable.

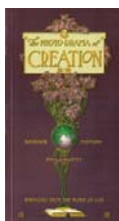
The High Priest washing and dressing in the Court represented The Christ complete, changing from the "Body of humiliation" to conditions of glory and power. Clad in his robes of glory, the High Priest represented Messiah, empowered to bless mankind—Exodus 28: 2; Philipians 3: 21.

Aaron blessing the people typified Messiah at His Second Advent blessing all who will become true Israelites during the Messianic Reign. The people shouting and falling on their faces represented recognition of the end of the reign of Sin and Death. Their arising represented resurrection.

Questions for Lesson 36

- 1* Why did God command the building of the Tabernacle?
- 2* Describe the Tabernacle and its surroundings in general. See Tabernacle Shadows, pages 13, 14. ["T" hereafter means Tabernacle Shadows.]
- 3 How big was the court? T, page 14.
- 4* What furniture was in the Court? Of what was the Altar composed? Give size. T, page 15.
- 5 Describe Tabernacle proper in general. T, page 13.
- 6* Give size of the Holy and Most Holy. T, page 13. What did they contain? T, pages 15-18.
- 7 In general, what did the Court, Holy, Most Holy, and Brazen Altar represent? T, pages 20-22. Par. 1
- 8* What did the Bullock of the Sin-offering represent?
- 9* What did the killing of the Bullock represent?
- 10 Who was the typical and who the antitypical High Priest?
- 11 How was Jesus' heart endeavors pictured in the Tabernacle type? Par. 2
- 12* What did carrying the blood into the Holy represent? Par. 3
- 13* What did passing under the second veil typify? T, page 21.
- 14* To whom did Jesus offer his sacrifice? Heb. 9:24
- 15* Does Jesus offer any other sacrifice besides his own?
- 16* What effect did the blood of the Bullock have upon the blood of the Goat? What did it represent? Par. 4
- 17* What did the High Priest in the glory robes represent? Par. 5
- 18* Who did Aaron represent when blessing the people? Par. 6

* The questions marked with an asterisk are especially for children.



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Lawrence Williams

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The Convention in Seattle Washington will be held on March 15-17. Details will follow.

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MEMORIAL DATE FOR 2013

Our Lord's Memorial will be Sunday, March 24, after 6:00 p.m. This is calculated as follows (all times Greenwich Mean Time): The vernal equinox is March 20, 11:03 a.m.; the new moon nearest this equinox is March 11, 7:52 p.m.; add 2 hours 21 minutes to get Jerusalem time which is March 11, 10:13 p.m.; therefore Nisan 1 is March 11, 6:00 p.m. to March 12, 6:00 p.m. Nisan 14 begins 13 full days later on Sunday, March 24, 6 p.m., ending Monday March 25, 6:00 p.m. The Memorial should therefore be observed after 6:00 p.m. Sunday, March 24. May God bless you in your preparation for, and commemoration of this wonderful event. Please send reports promptly.